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NOTE TO THE KREMLIN

THE transfer of negotiations from Berlin to the highest level represents, in one important respect, a necessary concession to the Russian point of view. Ever since the short-sighted American decision to block Mr. Molotov's "peace offensive," the Kremlin has been obstinately manœuvring in order to compel the Western Powers to resume the Foreign Ministers' Conference. It has deliberately created a dangerous situation in Berlin; the only alternatives for the West will soon be either armed intervention to clear the road and railway or Four Power negotiation. The sharpness of these alternatives has been concealed from the public by the success of the air-lift. But every expert knows that aircraft, despite their immense psychological effect, cannot be relied on to provision the Berliners in the winter months, let alone provide them with fuel. If the deadlock continued, therefore, or if the blockade were now lifted but re-imposed next winter, we should be compelled either to retreat from Berlin or to re-open communications with it by force of arms. Negotiation is necessary.

The Americans, fully aware of this dilemma, have been reluctant to walk into Stalin's parlour. They fear that a resumed debate on Germany would enable Mr. Molotov to renew his campaign against the Western decision to divide Germany. Mr. Marshall, therefore, would have preferred the three diplomatic notes to have been framed more brutally, setting a date after which force would be used to re-open communications with Berlin. M. Bidault, with the support of Mr. Bevin, has dissuaded him from this course. The notes, as finally agreed, are reported to state that negotiations can only be resumed *after* the raising of the blockade. It seems probable that, when the proprieties of face-saving have been fulfilled by both sides, the blockade will be lifted and negotiations begun.

But on what basis? Judging from the Warsaw communiqué, which expressed the unanimous view of the Eastern bloc on the German problem, the Russians will want to resume last December's futile discussions where they left off. Since they are already running the Eastern Zone in complete disregard of Western interests, they are eager to maintain the fiction of quadrilateral control. By so doing they would not affect their own freedom of action, but would prevent us from going ahead with our Western German plan. Postponement of a final break is wholly advantageous to them.

Our best course would be to propose precise plans for ending quadrilateral control in Berlin and recognising the *fait accompli* of provisional German administrations in Western and Eastern Germany. We should urge that this is merely an interim arrangement to be superseded finally by a unified German government. Simultaneously we should press for an immediate peace treaty with Austria. This may be easier to obtain now that Tito is at loggerheads with the Cominform, since the Yugoslav claim to Karinthia was the only substantial point of disagreement when negotiations broke down last April.

If there is to be an end of quadrilateral control, what will be the status of the Western sectors of Berlin? We believe that there is only one practical solution. Berlin, during the proposed interim arrangements, should be divided into two separate cities, a Western and an Eastern, the Western being treated as an enclave of Western Germany inside the Eastern territory. Each should have its own municipal administration and its own currency; and new and precise conditions should be negotiated for communications between Western Berlin and the rest of Western Germany.

That such a settlement could only endure for a limited period is no disadvantage. On the contrary, it would not only meet the objections to finalising the division of Germany but would enormously facilitate the carrying out of the Six-Power Agreement. The first response of the Ministers present in Frankfurt to this plan has not been enthusiastic. They object to the tone of finality and to such phrases as "constituent assembly," "constitution" and "provisional government," because they feel that they cannot consent to anything which implies a permanent partition of Germany. The three Social Democrats, who were received by Mr. Bevin last Tuesday, made the same point even more emphatically. They recommended to him that there should not be an elected constituent assembly this autumn, but merely a small *ad hoc* committee to draft an administrative statute. They went on to urge that the parliament, elected under this statute, should form out of its members not a provisional government, but an interim directorate. These German suggestions happen to be in line with the French criticisms of the Six-Power Plan, and they have the overwhelming advantage that, if adopted, they will leave room for a final peace treaty with the united Germany. Incidentally, they also provide us with a substantial justification for staying in Berlin after the end of quadrilateral control. It is to be hoped that Mr. Marshall and Mr. Bevin will give them their most earnest consideration.

Needs Must

The plain truth is that Parliament and the Government have accepted the E.R.P. agreement because they cannot face the consequences of going without the aid it brings. If we did have to do without it, we should be forced not only to cut our standard of living drastically—which would be worth while if we could see an end to it—but also to reduce our imports of essential materials, and by so doing cut down both our exports and our home programme of capital development, which is essential to long-run recovery. The Opposition's line in the debate has been to assert that this plight is due to the "squandering" of the earlier American Loan—which is sheer nonsense, unless it means that we ought to have practised much greater austerity in 1946 and 1947. That is a case this journal is entitled to argue, but which cannot be sustained by the Conservatives, who then fiercely opposed such austerities as we did practice. In 1945-6, as our readers know, we were critical about acceptance of the Loan; and we feel surer than ever that Great Britain would have been better without it. That, however, is spilt milk; and we are in a much worse position now for looking America's gift horse in the mouth. We can't help looking, all the same; and we find the conditions of the new aid bad enough to bear, but less bad than we had feared from earlier versions of the draft Agreement. The most serious points are that we are being forced to take further loans which there is little prospect of our being able

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to repay; that the colonies are being brought in compulsorily as contributors to the American strategic stock-pile; and that the American Administration acquires, if not a positive control, at any rate a very powerful influence over our investment policy, over our trade policy, and over our financial policy. Though our "sovereignty" is preserved in form, we can be forced into the status of an American satellite if the Americans choose to administer the agreement in that spirit. In the meantime we can only attempt the Herculean task of balancing our international accounts before the Americans tire of giving us subventions. That we have no hope of being able to do by our own efforts alone. Our chance depends on world recovery, and especially on recovery in Western Europe. On that matter Sir Stafford could only say that nothing much could be done to make European economic co-operation a reality until we and the other countries affected knew where they stood about E.R.P. This is not yet at all fully known; and Sir Stafford was pretty cautious in his expressions of hope about speedy results from co-operative action in Europe. He could hardly have spoken otherwise, in face of the uncertain outlook in Germany and the mess in France. For the rest, our gold and dollar reserves are already down below the reputed safety minimum of £500 millions, and we must do our level best, in the interests of the whole sterling area and of the world, not to deplete them further. That, even with E.R.P. at the expected level for this year, means further cuts in imports. Without E.R.P., it would be quite impossible.

The Bernadotte Proposals

Though the Arabs summarily rejected it, the Bernadotte plan conceded nearly all the demands of the Arab League and all the requirements of King Abdullah. By omitting any reference to Jewish statehood and permitting unrestricted emigration only for the next two years—when shipping will be notoriously short—it met the Arabs more than half-way on the two basic problems of Palestine. By including Transjordan within the plan and making Jerusalem an Arab city, it provided a capital for King Abdullah which would give him a religious prestige almost equal to that of Ibn Saud. By accepting the military *status quo* and giving the Negeb to the new and enlarged Transjordan in exchange for Western Gallilee, it provided the direct contact between Egypt and the other Arab States which Faruk demanded. Finally by taking Haifa and Lydda out of the Jewish state and making them free ports, it not only satisfied British Imperial interests, but removed any possibility that the Jews could become aggressive. The Bernadotte plan is in fact the White Paper of 1939 translated into the language of 1948, and it is clear that the mediator's proposals had the full approval of the Foreign Office and State Department. But there is this difference from the White Paper. Count Bernadotte has emphasised that if his plan, amended in the light of any proposals and counter-proposals, is not accepted by both sides, he will refer back to the Security Council and seek to obtain authority to put forward his own independent proposals. But will he obtain this authority? The Jews will at once put their case to the Security Council—and to American public opinion. There is every likelihood that the President will once again disown what the State Department has accepted and that Mr. Manuilski, who is chairman of the Council this month, will support the Jews in their adherence to the original partition plan. In that case we should be back where we were before the mediator was appointed; and yet another attempt to achieve American consent for the appeasement of the Arab League will have been shattered.

Independently Dependent

The reverse to the Finnish Communists does not mean that Finland proposes to attempt a breakaway from Russian influence. Last April's treaty of alliance with Moscow was concluded by the same parties that will once more be represented in the Government, and there are no illusions among any Finnish politicians that a move from the Soviet orbit to the Western is even remotely possible. What the results of the election do show is that Finland, as ever, will only make such concessions as are forced on her. The Kremlin must from time to time have considered the advisability of securing a more obviously "friendly" Government, and no doubt ruled out the project as not worth the trouble. Apart from a link with Finland sufficiently sentimental to affect the Politburo, memories of the Finnish-Soviet war compel the admission that bringing the Finns to heel is a costly and laborious process. Why become involved in another prestige-losing adventure when the Finns will in any case walk more or less agreeably at your side?

The Unhappy Nizam

The situation in Hyderabad daily grows worse. Economic sanctions imposed by the Government of India cripple the economic life of the State. The railways are only operating on a limited scale. To meet the rising demand for Indian currency, the Nizam's government had been disposing of Indian Government Securities. The Indian Government has now put a stop to the transfers on the grounds that there is evidence to show that the Nizam has been using part of the proceeds to buy war-like stores. The Nizam can no doubt hold out some weeks yet, but it is doubtful whether he can make further concessions without bringing down on his head the fanatical wrath of the powerful Kazim Razvi. The Indian Government appears not to have completely made up its mind on the action to be taken. One section advises caution and the policy of waiting for the ripe plum to fall of its own volition, assisted by a little branch-shaking to be provided by the Hindu organisations within the State. The other wants to dispatch an army forthwith and settle the matter. If the latter course is adopted, Kazim Razvi and his supporters will fight fanatically. Either way bloodshed is probable, but the waiting policy would probably mean less violence.

Miners in Conference

At the Miners' Conference this week, the leaders were able to announce that the National Coal Board had accepted full schemes of additional compensation for injured miners and for supplementary unemployment benefits if men are idle through the closing or reorganisation of pits. The compensation plan follows the line of a proposal made in the Beveridge Report, but not incorporated in the general Industrial Injury Scheme. Both the unemployment benefits and the compensation will be additional to those available under the general scheme. In commenting on the working losses that will be shown in the National Coal Board's Report due to be issued this coming week, both Mr. Lawther and Mr. Horner spoke of the bad condition of many mines, and pointed out that big sums had already been sunk in improvements. They also emphasised that steps had to be taken to improve on the bad wages and conditions that had existed under private ownership. They spoke strongly in favour of the reorganisation plan as being in the miners' long-run interests, whatever hardships it might involve for the time being; and both condemned unofficial stoppages and both called for full co-operation with the N.C.B. Mr. Lawther, incidentally, went out of his way to insist that the N.U.M. must keep its independence and must not become involved in responsibility for management—thus opposing the demand of the Scottish Miners for direct representation of the Union on the N.C.B. The Conference passed unanimously a proposal that a complete new wage structure should be worked out for the industry. While it was sitting, the N.C.B. announced that, up to the end of June, the industry had just managed to exceed half its output target for the year.

IN PARLIAMENT : Help !

Wednesday

THE Imperial isolationists and the Communists together in one Lobby on Tuesday night, looked somewhat improper. Critics of the Economic Co-operation Agreement who wouldn't lie with either, kept scrupulously away. The House voted for the Agreement; but none but the ingenuous did so without wondering whether it really was what it seemed, or whether it was merely a formula to authorise the deal, a blank draft, duly signed, which each party would later claim the right to fill-in.

Cripps made it all look easy. He skated on, did a few figures, said, "Look ! No strings ! " and skated off. Those who followed him were rather more cautious about the thickness of the ice and the slipperiness of the surface. How long would the Agreement sustain Britain ? The Tories were in a now familiar dilemma. On the one hand, they wanted aid for the country; on the other hand, they could not welcome aid to Socialism. While voting for the Agreement, both Lyttelton and Stanley were careful to rub the Government's nose into the fact that the help it was getting was Capitalist help.

The Government spokesmen, who had to express due thanks for the dollars, were inhibited from replying fully, although Wilson was compelled to remind the Opposition, in effect, that if Britain hadn't sacrificed her resources to pay for the war, she would not now be holding a begging-bowl. Unconstrained by Ministerial responsibility, Norman Smith made the same point in a bold speech that delighted the House. Oliver Twist had asked for more.

In supporting the Agreement, Lyttelton had indicated his unwillingness to break the Anglo-American life-line. Was there a hint, both in his speech and in Eccles's, that when the Americans came to interpret the Agreement, they would and should be less favourable to a Government following a Socialist policy than to a Conservative Government ? Were the Tory speeches an incitement to the E.R.P. administrator to discourage more Socialism at home ? Did they presage a 1950 election with the Tory slogan "A vote for Attlee is a vote against Hoffman" ? And with Dewey as President playing with Woolton, would the Liberal Republicans be sending a telegram to Morgan Phillips ? America's interest in the next General Election rose in front of Members with varying degrees of attractiveness as the debate wore on.

The main argument of Cripps and Douglas Jay was an affirmation of the categorical imperative, "What we have to do, let us do gladly." Pritt, Platts-Mills and Solley argued, along with the *Daily Worker*, and Baxter, along with the *Express*, that there is no sense in being glad about doing what you don't have to do. The two Front Benches combined to resist their faith in free-will.

A new element was introduced into the discussion by Eccles, whose amiable manner and reasonable mind are normally the nearest thing to euthanasia that the Tories can offer the Government. On this occasion, he claimed that E.R.P. was an instrument of foreign policy, designed to check the forward march of Communism, which, he thought, was no more nor less than a variant of Socialism. Paradoxically, the Tories, while alleging E.R.P. to be a means of promoting Western recovery and of defending Western Europe, attacked the incipient plans of some of the Western countries to achieve economic understandings among themselves. But even on the Labour Benches, there appeared to be illusions about the nature of the co-operation which Wilson said "has been made possible by U.S. generosity." Would it permit the emergence of "the great third trading and producing area"—the darling of the Western Unionists—in competition with the U.S.A. ?

Boothby regretted that Article II of the Agreement would hinder the creation of international cartels—the instruments of Western European co-operation. But that didn't prevent him from going into the same Lobby with Eccles, who had already stated his alarm at the likelihood of planned cartels. Nor could Jay and Hinchingbrooke, who had had a mild tiff over planning earlier in the afternoon, do other than make it up in the evening. The fact is that the supporters of the Agreement had many voices but one hungry mouth.

MAURICE EDELMAN

TITO'S CHOICE

THE quarrel between Moscow and Belgrade is the most momentous event that has occurred within the internal structure of Communism since Trotsky fled to the Bosphorus. Superficially, the parallel is striking. In both cases violent denunciations and bitter recriminations fly back and forth between leaders who had seemed to the outside world the most solid of allies; in both cases personal ambitions are inextricably confused with doctrinal differences. In both cases there is a period in which the excommunicated leader has still time to recant and be received back, a penitent, into the arms of the Church. If that opportunity is allowed to pass, then certain inexorable developments follow. We judge to-day that a settlement is still possible between Moscow and Belgrade; Tito and his colleagues have been loaded with abuse, but they have not yet passed into the category of apes, baboons, reptiles and other Fascist beasts.

The comparison between Trotsky and Tito, however, is more important for the differences it emphasises rather than for its surface resemblances. Trotsky had a following of unknown dimensions within the Soviet Union, and outside Russia the adulation of a motley collection of disgruntled Marxists. Tito is the adored head of the strongest of the so-called satellite States. All the other Eastern European countries were liberated by the Soviet Union, and given Governments largely chosen in Moscow. The Yugoslav partisans, with the aid of war material dropped from the West, liberated their own country with no more than a few weeks of Soviet help in the last stages of the war. The fighting in Yugoslavia was probably the most heroic, in the strict sense of the word, that occurred anywhere over the vast area of the second world war. Every partisan who took to the woods risked torture as well as death; almost everyone in Yugoslavia has friends or relatives murdered with all the savagery of the rival Fascist gangs who served the Germans. At the end of the war Tito had created out of peasant boys a highly trained and efficient army which had held twenty-five divisions of the enemy and out-fought Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Ustashi and Chetniks. Thus, in outlawing the Yugoslav Communist Party, which has created its own leadership, Moscow and the Cominform are challenging the one Eastern European country which can not only boast of great constructive achievements, but which also possesses a powerful army and is inflated by national arrogance and pride in its military achievements. The least comprehensible element in the whole affair is that, in replying to the Cominform's commination, the Yugoslavs themselves have revealed that in recent letters from Moscow, the Soviet Party gave an apocryphal account of the liberation of Yugoslavia by the Red Army, and added, as if to make the insult unforgivable, that "the Yugoslav Communist Party loudly boasted about its successes in the war, though it had no more merit than the Polish, Czechoslovak, Rumanian, Hungarian, Albanian, Bulgarian, etc., Parties."

This is hard to explain. If, as it is natural to assume, Moscow wishes to detach as many Yugoslav Communists as possible from their leaders, why choose to address to the Yugoslavs the one unforgivable insult that every partisan knows to be untrue and which can tend to unite them behind Tito? Tito's reason for publishing the insult is clear enough, and, if it did not sound extravagant, one might almost be tempted to wonder whether Tito did not himself father this humiliating falsehood on Moscow in order to consolidate his own ranks!

Deeply wounding though such an insult must be to the Yugoslavs, we do not believe that reconciliation is impossible. An intervention by Stalin, combined with judicious purges in Moscow and Belgrade, may still conceivably patch up a peace, even though they cannot re-establish confidence. Reading between the lines of the more responsible organs of Communist opinion in Eastern Europe, we note that neighbouring Communist Parties, led by men of long experience like Rakoczi in Budapest and Dimitrov in Bulgaria, have carefully distinguished between Tito's party and the Yugoslav State. While falling into line on doctrinal matters, these Communist Parties have made it clear that their close relations with Yugoslavia may remain intact. A Bulgarian cultural mission has arrived in Belgrade in the last few days. Only the Albanians, behaving with the same sort of reckless puerility which caused British ships to strike mines in the Corfu channel, have taken the plunge, denouncing the formal agreements between Yugoslavia and Albania, while castigating Tito for errors of nationalist extremism of which, if anyone is guilty, the Albanians are surely ten times more so than the Yugoslavs. What the men of experience appear to hope for—it may be noted that the Soviet press has so far withheld all comment upon the affair—is that there need be no breaking of State relations, no resort to sanctions, commercial or political, and that meanwhile the Yugoslavs will "correct their mistakes" and thereby pave the way for reconciliation.

The actual timing of the commination may be explained by a wish to influence the course of the Party Congress which the Yugoslavs have arranged (after two years of hesitation) for later this month. This is the first public congress which the Yugoslav Communists have held since they were banned in 1921; and the first congress of any kind since their leaders met secretly in Zagreb in 1940. The Russian delegation has announced that it will not attend. Much for the future of Communism will turn on the decisions of this Congress. Presumably as a result of the Cominform's challenge, the Yugoslav Party have now published the report on its programme and record which it will present to the Congress. It appears to have been written before the Cominform's public denunciation, but after the private letters from the Soviet Party attacking its policy. It amounts to a demonstration that in all points the Yugoslav Party has strictly adhered to the correct lines of transition from a primitive to a Communist economy, and rebuts the Cominform's charges by alleging that the Yugoslav Communists have, in fact, dominated the National Front and followed the correct line in moving by stages towards Socialism and co-operative agriculture. If we are to judge by this document, the Yugoslavs, always at their best and toughest when on their mettle, will pay quiet heed to many of the Cominform's strictures where this can be done without admitting guilt. People from the West have learnt in the last few years that it is normally beyond the Yugoslavs to admit guilt; and it is just possible that the Russians also know this. There was some irony in Tito's remark at the Zagreb Congress that "the first quality of a Bolshevik, whereby he differs from other people, is *modesty*" (Tito's italics). This minor virtue never had much credit among the South Slavs, who are a glorious and genuinely heroic people, uninhibited by the milder graces. They are not modest heroes.

It is against the background of Eastern Europe as a whole that the deeper origins of the affair should be sought. Long and laborious debate among Communists from Warsaw and Budapest, Bucharest and the Balkans, has illustrated the fundamental problem which faced them, and still faces them, after their virtual accession to power. It is a problem of transition. How must countries of primitive or feudal economy make the transition to Communism? If one cuts through the tangle of verbal undergrowth, it is possible to see the way in which the solution is being worked out. Two conclusions appear to have been added to the doctrinal canon. The first is that there need be no slavish following of Soviet examples—and mistakes—but that there must be an intimate correlation with Soviet experience. This means that the East European countries should evolve new transitional forms to carry them from primitive capitalism to Socialism. Over these experiments the Bolsheviks will preside with anxious care. The second conclusion, no less important, is that Socialism is now possible in several countries, but upon the condition that they move and march together.

From these assumptions there follows the practice of "people's democracy." This is a stage of evolution broadly comparable with Lenin's NEP. Its Marxist justification is that there can be no development of Socialism before the economic conditions allow a radical change in the methods of production. Modernisation and industrialisation will permit a constant raising of the standard of life both of peasants and workers, and encourage the growth of collective enterprise. But it is no part of Communist intention that each of the East European countries shall imitate the Soviet Union by developing an isolated "Socialism in one country." They should not and, in the orthodox view (though the Yugoslavs have apparently differed) they cannot do this. The components of "eastern union" may each remain nationalist in form; they must, if they are to succeed, become solidly and collectively Socialist in content. They must create such economic ties and interests between each other that frontiers cease to have great importance. Once the electricity systems of Eastern Europe were linked up in groups of two or three, for instance, it would become of less importance who held the territory upon which the power stations stand. This order of ideas is no doubt the inwardness of the Cominform's demand for an "internationalist" leadership, and the basis of suspicion that the Yugoslav Communists are beginning to see their tasks in national rather than Socialist—that is, international—terms. Unlike many enthusiasts for "Western Union," the Cominform does not put the political cart before the economic horse.

If doctrine were all, there would be little doubt of a reconciliation between Moscow and Belgrade. Tito has no doubt been a thorn in Moscow's side. Dimitrov was rebuked for discussing a possible Balkan Federation before, in the Cominform's view, the necessary economic basis had been achieved, and Tito has gone farther in the same direction. Tito has taken an excessively nationalistic point of view about Karinthia and Trieste, and possibly increased the difficulties of the Greek situation by his desire for an independent Macedonia. These quarrels could probably be ironed out, and on the main economic problem of the transition towards Socialism, the Yugoslavs would seem to be able to give the effective answer that of all Eastern European countries, they have adhered most strictly to the Protocol. But these are no longer the real issues. Tito and the Yugoslav Party are too independent and have flouted Moscow. Will the Yugoslav Party recant? Will they find some face-saving device or persist in their ways and take the inevitable road to damnation? The experience of another great disciplinary body, the Roman Catholic Church, suggests that heretics, if they allow the moment of repentance to pass, must go the whole hog. They first attempt to show themselves more orthodox than the Pope; then they must accept isolation and perhaps find themselves driven into frantic opposition. This does not mean that there is any possibility in the case of Yugoslavia that Tito will follow the path of Trotsky and become in effect an ally of the enemies of the Soviet Union. But it does mean that he has before him an inescapable choice. If he proceeds upon his independent path, he must tighten up discipline within his own party, in unhappy isolation from his Slav and Communist friends; he must clamp down ever more firmly upon discussion, since to allow freedom would be to risk strengthening opposition which might try to overthrow him either because of Western sympathies or because it sought to bring Yugoslavia back into the Moscow fold. His choice is speedily to seek reconciliation with the Cominform, or to find himself an isolated and increasingly totalitarian dictator.

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TWO LEVIATHANS

THE Transport and General Workers' Union has grown and grown; and in the course of its growth a large number of once independent trade unions have been swallowed up. Ben Tillett's pioneer Tea Porters' Union of 1887 began it, turning into the Dockers' Union during the historic struggle of 1889. The Dockers in their turn became the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union, and even before the first world war this body had acquired a general section which included a proportion of the tinplate workers in South Wales, clay miners in Cornwall, and a good many other groups which had nothing to do with docks, or even with transport. After the first war came a big amalgamation which brought in the tramwaymen and busmen, the majority of the carters and lorry men, and a number of other groups. The Dockers' Union became the Transport Workers, with Ernest Bevin as Ben Tillett's successor in the leadership. Not content with this, the enlarged union a year or two later took over the remains of the once vast and still highly miscellaneous Workers' Union, which was in a bad way. This brought in a host of less skilled workers in dozens of different industries, including a substantial group of agricultural workers. Further amalgamations and a continuously active recruiting campaign raised the membership still further and diversified it yet more. It took over the Scottish Farm Servants' Union, and became a power in chemicals and in flour-milling. In the middle 'thirties its membership reached half a million, and in 1946, thanks to prodigious wartime growth, it topped the million, and was entitled to claim to be the largest trade union in the world.

Even before 1939 there had been internal troubles, and certain groups of workers had broken away and re-formed independent societies. A section of the Scottish dockers had set up a Scottish Transport Workers' Union, which was at war on Clydeside with the T. and G.W. In London some of the busmen, objecting to the centralised control of their affairs, had formed a London Passenger Transport Workers' Union, which was still a source of trouble when the buses were nationalised a year or so ago. The lightermen and stevedores in the Port of London also asserted their independence. Moreover, side by side with the T. and G.W., a second union, the General and Municipal Workers, had been passing through a similar, though less spectacular, process of agglomeration. This began as Will Thorne's Gownworkers' Union of 1889, and swallowed up, among other societies, Mary Macarthur's National Federation of Women Workers, a Birmingham-centred Municipal and General Union, the powerful National Amalgamated Union of Labour, active in the North of England, and several other general labourers' unions of some size. The T. and G.W. and the G. and M.W. were not indeed rivals over the entire field: the G. and M.W. kept off transport, except here and there, and the T. and G.W. kept off the local government services. There was even some attempt to avoid organising in the same factories, and to abstain from the earlier practice whereby one "general" union unblushingly poached another's members. But despite a gentleman's agreement, which has worked reasonably well, the two societies have been rivals over a wide field, especially in taking over lesser societies and in breaking new ground; and last year the General and Municipal, with more than 800,000 members and an even wider diversity than its rival, was the second largest union in the Trades Union Congress.

Is this bigness good or bad? The next biggest, the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the National Union of Mineworkers, and the National Union of Railwaymen, are at least fairly homogeneous bodies, among whose members a common concern narrower than that of being wage-earners exists. They can organise themselves fairly easily into districts, with local or regional machinery to represent their members; and they can hold regional or even national conferences that can be reasonably representative without being bloated beyond manageable size. Bigness of itself always brings with it some danger of bureaucracy and of remoteness of the leaders from the rank and file; but this danger can be countered when the local and regional organisation is good and is given adequate scope. But how can unions as miscellaneous as the Transport Workers or the Municipal Workers possibly be organised in a democratic way? If every separate trade or group within them is to have its own local, regional and national machinery, besides the machinery needed at each level for the union as a whole, by what possible display of energy can national leaders hope to keep in touch with all these centres of activity: or, if there is to be no such sectional system of organisation, how are the various groups to make their voices heard at all?

Of the two leviathans, the Transport and General Workers have gone much the further in establishing separate machinery for the heterogeneous groups included in the membership. On paper, the T. and G.W. has a highly democratic constitution; and no considerable section can complain that it lacks the means of making its voice heard. There is, however, a difficulty, which no piling of committee on committee, or of sectional conference on sectional conference, can solve. Each individual member pays his contribution to the funds of the union as a whole, and must draw on the union's central fund if he is to receive anything in return. This works out well enough in the case of most types of benefit; but it means that the power to give strike pay is vested exclusively in the national executive, and accordingly that strike action by any section needs the executive's endorsement. In the framing of policy, the putting forward of wage and other demands, the establishment of conciliation machinery, and the making of collective agreements, the sections of the membership directly affected can be, and are, consulted at every stage. But consultation is one thing, and authority another; and in the last resort the power of decision never rests with the persons affected. It is, and it must be, as long as the funds are centralised, a matter for the union as a whole.

This is the root of the trouble in the T. and G.W. Its members, however much they may be consulted, never feel that they are free to manage their own affairs. They do not regard the agreements made on their behalf as their own agreements. They think of the union not as "we," but as "they"—as an external body which they are required to obey, not as their own chosen and representative instrument.

How can it be otherwise, in a body made up of so many diverse elements? As long as all the members had a common sense of exploitation and of the need to stick together for the vindication of their fundamental trade union rights, this sense was strong enough to put the differences, save occasionally, into the background; and the amalgamation of disparate groups could work tolerably well. But with the rights of collective bargaining fully recognised and more and more of the members earning good money under greatly improved conditions of work the whole situation became different. Both the Dockers and the Gownworkers, in their early days, embodied the notion of "class-unionism" as against that of the older "craft-unionism" that had done so little to help the bottom dogs. To-day, the bottom dogs are no longer at the bottom, and a spirit that has much in common with "craft-unionism" has manifested itself among them. There is not the same need as there used to be for mass-unions open to all comers, and concerned to fight the common battles of the "labouring class." These battles have been fought, and mainly won; and now it is a matter of settling conditions trade by trade by orderly processes of bargaining, and of drawing up agreements which will command respect because the workers governed by them feel them to be their own.

What, then, is the remedy? Both the Transport and General Workers' Union and the General and Municipal Workers' Union need breaking up and sorting out into more manageable units. We do not profess to be able to lay down whether there should be a single union for materials, coach, and road transport workers, or separate unions for dockers, busmen and tramwaymen, lorry men, canal workers, and the rest—as there are already separate unions for seamen and for railwaymen. But we do feel pretty certain that the Transport Workers and the General Workers ought to be prised apart, and that in the General and Municipal Workers there ought to be a similar chasm between the Municipal and the General. Whether the "ground" groups belonging to the two could then be amalgamated into a single General Workers' Union or further divided up, and if so to what extent, is a question for discussion, and certainly not one in which we have, here and now, any dogma to advance. We are concerned only to argue that, as nearly as possible, each great body of workers belonging to a common industry ought to have the power and the responsibility of making its own agreements, of raising and administering its own funds, and of running its own union subject only to such general authority as may be vested in the Trades Union Congress as the representative of the entire working class.

It is easy to understand that this doctrine may be unacceptable, not only to trade union officials who do not like the idea of pulling apart what they have successfully built up, but also to many trade unionists who take a pride in the bigness of the union and in the consideration which, because of this bigness, it is certain to enjoy. After all, one great reason why so many came together into a single body was that they feared being too weak to stand alone, section by section, especially in times of bad trade and exceptional stress. The fusion of forces was necessary in the formative stages while the trade unions of the less skilled workers were still fighting for the bare right to live. We are arguing that it is no longer needed to-day, when many of the sections are fully capable of standing by themselves; but it would be surprising if the conclusion were easily accepted among men who have still the sense of exploitation strongly in them, and are by no means certain what trials they may have yet to face.

FONS WILL BE FONS

"The trusteeship council of U.N. was occupied this afternoon by the marital affairs of the Fon of Bikom . . . investigation showed that he had 110 wives."—THE TIMES, *June 24th.*

The fate of the brides of the Fon
Disquiets the Uno trustees,
The case to the council has gone
Of the sadly polygamous Fon,
Whom the British appear to appease.

The British their mandate defend
In the so-far content Cameroons,
And the light of their countenance lend
To Fons, who in Bikom may spend
One hundred and ten honeymoons.

Do Fons have more brides than they need?
Should we ration their conjugal rights?
Should we sanction a new moral lead?
It's a delicate matter indeed
To divorce those whom juju unites.

Though Britain is second to none
In regretting the number of brides,
In Bikom, where Fons like their fun,
Much ignorant damage is done
If progress takes too violent strides.

If in Bikom old custom survives,
And accredited virgins they pool,
The Mandatory Power connives,
For the Fon with a hundred-odd brides
Is a pillar of indirect rule.

In principle, Fons we deplore,
But Lake Chad is not Lake Success,
The morals of Fons we ignore—
Far better, Fons have one bride more
Than Britain have one Mandate less.

SAGITTARIUS

A LONDON DIARY

LISTENING to the Prime Minister's broadcast on Sunday evening, I was struck by the contrast between the flat opening with its officialese language and the admirable material which followed, and I was reminded of a scene which must have occurred scores of times at Bush House during the war. Owing to the difficulties and dangers of listening in occupied Europe, it was essential that broadcasters on the European Service should waste no words. Politicians, who only spoke occasionally, used to arrive only to find that their scripts had been ruthlessly cut and rearranged and the introductory paragraphs often eliminated altogether. When they protested, they were asked to imagine on the wall behind the microphone a barometer, falling steadily while they spoke. "That," they were told, "is your audience." I have often thought that this piece of wartime advice should be given to every broadcaster in the Home Service, and especially to Front Bench politicians. In the House of Commons they get into the habit of beginning a speech with a couple of minutes of unimportant introduction, while members settle down or come in from the Smoke Room, or, alternatively, go out. A Front Bench speech is like a play. It never plunges *in medias res* for fear that the late-comer will miss the point. Successful broadcasting demands exactly the opposite technique, more like that of a good front-page story in a popular newspaper. The speaker must catch his audience with his very first words; they must express his personality and his theme. The same sentences two minutes later may be useless, because by then half the audience will have melted away. An experienced B.B.C. producer tells me that the best cure is to concentrate attention on the first sentences, when you are writing a broadcast. Get them exactly right, and the rest of the script should write itself.

* * *

I wonder what the circumstances were last Sunday which stimulated Nye Bevan in the course of a mass meeting at Belle Vue Park, Manchester, to describe the Tory Party as "lower than vermin." Did he lose his temper when heckled, or did the sentence pop out in the middle of one of his brilliant and biting perorations? Whatever the reason for the slip, if I know anything about the Tory Central Office, we have not heard the last of it. "Lower than vermin," along with the Tinker's cuss," will be immortalised. Both are phrases which raised an immediate cheer among the Labour audience to which they were addressed, only to lose countless votes among the electors who don't attend party meetings but do decide election results. In my experience, most British people react hostilely to political abuse. Politicians fail to realise this because they live in a peculiar atmosphere of party politics, and address meetings which consist overwhelmingly of their own politically conscious supporters, salted with a few politically conscious opponents. In this atmosphere, invective is immensely effective, but it reads very differently next morning in cold print. Mr. Churchill won millions of votes for the Labour Party by abusing it in 1945. It would be a pity if Mr. Bevan, Churchill's only equal as a platform orator to-day, were to hand them back again to the party for which he feels a deep, burning hatred."

* * *

Ploughing his lonely furrow in the House of Commons, Willie Gallacher reminded Hector McNeil that he, too, used to talk about imperialism leading to war, and that nowadays the great imperialist nation is the United States. He was quite right. But the question for those who saw during the war that America was in process of changing from an isolationist to an imperialist power, was what tactics the Soviet Union would adopt in the post-war conflict which, in one form or another, was inevitable between Soviet Communism and American imperialism. Stalin's pronouncements seemed to promise that the U.S.S.R. would try to co-operate with Britain and America on the world stage, while offering the world an example of the advantages of a Socialist economy in contrast with the slumps and booms of capitalism. Soviet policy, however, seemed designed to hasten America along the path of militant imperialism which only a section of her population were at first ready to favour. By denouncing all except Communists as enemies, the Soviet Union threw away the enormous asset of friendship and respect which she had gained amongst common people all over the world, and by refusing to give her own Socialist lead to the Paris Conference on the Marshall offer, she turned Western Europe into a satellite of America. The alternative policy would have demonstrated the contradictions of American capitalism and the dangers of American domination; Socialists everywhere would have looked to the Soviet Union for support. The danger of insisting on this sharp division between Communists and everyone else is now so obvious that I think it is still possible even now, that Russia may switch her line as she did in 1934, when she joined the League of Nations. The danger of war lies in the state of mind engendered by these three years of cold war; agreements which would have been welcomed by all except a handful of violent anti-Communists soon after the war, will now be denounced as appeasement.

* * *

If Hector McNeil had had longer to answer the charge about imperialism being the cause of war, he might, I think, have done so effectively by a simple analogy. If you are asked the cause of a dog-fight, you can say it is because the dogs are not on a leash. That is the political answer to war, advanced by Norman Angell and other League of Nations enthusiasts. It doesn't work because there is no-one in charge of the big national dogs, and they will not tie themselves up. Or you can say that if the bone supply were properly organised, the dogs would not be fighting. That is the Socialist answer. Lenin was quite right that in our period wars have arisen from the competition of capitalist states and that the danger arises especially when capitalism, unable to expand further at home, becomes imperialist and competes for overseas markets. Then there is the third answer, which is also true, that it is the nature of dogs (and humans) to bark and bite. In other words, they may quarrel over many different things. They instinctively fight for power which, in our age, has been mainly economic. They fight because they are thwarted or afraid; afraid of internal collapse or of losing their world position, economic and political. But not all such conflicts lead to war; many apparently inevitable wars have never occurred.

* * *

I have had a letter suggesting that the Coal Board and the Trade Unions have come to an agreement not to employ any more coloured workers in the mines. This rumour has naturally caused great indignation among coloured people in this country, who feel it to be a particularly vicious application of the colour bar. The Coal Board, however, assures me that there is no colour bar, and that the true position is a trifle more complicated. Some time ago the Coal Board contracted to place 30,000 D.P.s in the mines. The bulk of these have been trained and are at work, and at the moment there are 800 trained D.P.s still to be absorbed, apart from 4,000 not yet trained. None of them can, of course, be employed without the consent of the Miners' Lodges concerned; and in some areas that consent is less readily obtained than in others. It will only be after patient negotiating that the Coal Board can fulfil its obligations to the D.P.s. Consequently, it is quite beyond the Board's capacity to try to recruit large numbers of coloured workers from the Empire, and there is indeed an understanding that they should not do so. If they did, there would be no guarantee that they could be immediately absorbed. The prejudice is not against coloured miners as such, but against the introduction of non-local elements in large blocks. A number of coloured miners are already working in Scotland and Wales. Since no coloured person living in England who wants to work in the mines is refused, it cannot be said that there is a colour bar. But there is some prejudice in the mines against "foreign," including "coloured," labour, and the Coal Board may have to do more to overcome it if it is to recruit the further 24,000 workers needed to complete the year's target figure.

* * *

A number of people—one letter is printed in our correspondence columns—have written to protest against a phrase in Mr. Whitebait's review of the new American film, *Gentleman's Agreement*. Mr. Whitebait observed that Jews "like to have it both ways, to keep their own racial identity while sharing their neighbours' privileges." The Jewish problem, as the film set out to show, is almost impossible to discuss without causing offence. The Gentile may try, but he can never get inside the skin of a Jew, or imagine what it feels like to be non-Aryan. That, of course, is the prime cause of anti-Semitism. Moreover, our language seems inadequate to describe the facts. Whatever analogy we use in writing about the Jews, it is always just wrong. A nation? A race? A religion? The words we use to explain only distort until one is driven to say that a Jew is anyone who calls himself a Jew. (Even that is not correct according to the Nuremberg decrees, which classed as Jews people who had rejected the Jewish community!) As for the issue of "the double loyalty" which Mr. Whitebait raised, this is even more elusive. Most Jews, apart from extreme Revisionists like Peter Bergson, refuse to admit the implication of the phrase. Yet though the words may not be exact, they point to a real problem. If "double loyalty" is a wrong description, there is something else which "sets the Jews apart." My own view is that the Jewish problem is literally a unique problem, and that is why all the words and concepts which we use to describe it are inadequate. I am sure that Mr. Whitebait was not satisfied by his. But he was trying to raise the question rather than to settle it.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

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Incidentally, it was at first rather disconcerting to see a number of women wearing large transparent sun-bonnets and very fine specimens of Guardee moustaches. These latter were false, of course, but somehow or other, they showed that English people, as a whole, can never be Communists.—*Nottingham Evening Post*. (J. Tatham.)

Baked beans on toast and Welsh rarebit are being ordered more often than sole-and-chips or plaice-and-chips by Yarmouth's visitors this summer. "The holiday-makers . . . are more discriminating and study the menu more carefully before they say what they want."—*Evening News*. (Mr. M. A. Sayer.)

As the 6.30 workmen's bus passed the Crescent, Middlesbrough, yesterday morning, passengers saw a naked woman walking along the road shouting "There's nothing but corned beef all the week."—*Northern Echo*. (Mrs. G. E. Cooper.)

To Let, Public Convenience, The Score, Corton. For particulars apply to . . .—*Journal*, Lowestoft. (A. F. Betterton.)

On Saturday the Stanley Engineering Co., Bath, held their outing to Southsea. Owing to pressure of work none of the staff was able to go. However, a most enjoyable time was had by all.—*Bath & Wilts Chronicle & Herald*. (M. J. Errish.)

The Alan Turner Opera Company—among the best-known amateurs in the Midlands—have purged their membership list of Communists for their March production of "Chu Chin Chow."—*Daily Mail*. (R. Prentice.)

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BLIND ASTRONOMY

PROFESSOR ASHBY will tell you that Lovell is jealous of his shallots. Dr. Lovell thinks that Ashby is envious of his 130 feet high "beanstalk." That is what happens when a botanist, who is interested in radar, shares research grounds with a radar expert who is a keen horticulturist. Jodrell Bank in Cheshire was the field station of the Manchester University Botany Department which offered a pitch for the radar caravans of the Physics Department.

Dr. Bernard Lovell was a wartime "boffin" who, with Professor P. I. Dee, and a brilliant team, was responsible for H_2S. That was the secret of "blind bombing"—a radar device which enabled an aircraft to see its target in pitch darkness or through dense cloud. Airborne radar sent down a beam of wireless pulses which were reflected back—like invisible light—from objects on the ground and formed a picture on a television screen which gave a luminous chart of a coastline or a town, with identifiable landmarks. After the war Lovell joined forces with Professor P. M. S. Blackett at Manchester University, to try to use radar in the study of cosmic rays, those atomic particles which continuously bombard the earth from Outer Space.

Lovell and his team had acquired a motley collection of service surplus equipment, including an unwanted searchlight and several trailer caravans. They moved into Jodrell Bank, with its neat garden beds, debouched like a travelling fair into the adjoining fields—and camped.

The original idea was to use wartime radar techniques, firing off pulses and catching the echoes from obstacles in space, to try to locate the source of cosmic ray showers. But when they started to explore the heavens in this way, the scientists began to get curious results. They found that they were getting a lot of echoes for which there was no explanation until they compared notes with the astronomers. Then they decided that they must be picking up meteor trails. They checked on the conventional ones and found that they coincided with the observations of the visual astronomers.

Discovering new meteor trails was at first an amusing hobby. But when in the spring of last year the physicists were studying the antics of another familiar meteor shower, the Aquarids, they found strange events occurring. The Aquarids shower behaved according to astronomical convention. The showers, which in the darkness were visible by telescope, were faithfully recorded and counted on the radar instruments, but, on a different bearing, on which no meteors were supposed to exist, the radar-astronomers got swarms of signals. These increased, long after the Aquarids had "gone to bed," and multiplied in the daylight hours. The source was a "radiant," the apparent focal point of a meteor shower, in the line of the constellation Pisces. They christened them the Piscids. Subsequently they picked up several new radiants in the direction of the Pleiades, of Taurus and of Perseus. The existence of these extremely active meteor showers had never been known or suspected by the visual astronomers. The reason, of course, is that they occur in daylight and are therefore invisible by optical methods. Here then is a technique of all-hour, all-weather astronomy. In rain or shine the radar instruments can track meteor invasions of our atmosphere as efficiently and precisely as they could pick up the Luftwaffe long before they reached these islands. The metors show up as tiny points of light, the check-in of the returning echo, on a television screen. What had started off as an amusing diversion became an important new departure in science.

Radar techniques can also be used in the case of astral bodies and heavenly phenomena much more remote than meteor showers which manifest themselves in our own atmosphere. The moon, 239,000 miles away, can be used as a sounding board for radar echoes. A signal can travel to the moon and back 478,000 miles—in 2½ seconds. Sir Edward Appleton, in 1945, gave a detailed account of how the moon can be reached by radar, and in 1946 the American Army Signal Corps reported that they had established contact. Whether, like hoisting a flag, landing a radar echo establishes a U.S. claim for possession of the moon is a matter we must leave to the international lawyers. With powerful transmitters, ultra-short waves and sensitive receivers, it should be feasible to reach at least some of the solar planets. It would be extremely useful to get some idea of Venus beneath her seven veils. Because this planet, which is about the same size as the earth, is continuously shrouded in cloud, it is still a tantalising mystery to the visual astronomers. But the clouds of Venus will present no greater obstacle to the radar pulses than a smoke screen over Essen or Dortmund.

The echo technique, that is, initiating the pulse and transmitting it to produce an echo, is not, however, the only contribution of wartime radar. The production and reception of centimetre waves and the development of ingenious, and enormous, paraballoid aerials provides the means to receive signals sent out from a remote space. These aerials are shaped like the reflector of a bowl electric-fire or a motor car headlight. They can be used both for transmission and reception. Like a searchlight reflector they can concentrate the outgoing signals into a narrow beam. They can pick up and focus the incoming signals and define a point from which they came. For instance, there are solar and galactic "noises" which are all too familiar to radio experts, because they are a form of interference which upset radio transmission. Much work on solar noise has been done by Appleton and Dr. Hey.

There are a series of boadcasting stations on the sun which send out "programmes," much crazier than ITMA, on extremely short wavelengths. These "transmitters" are what we know as sun spots, the dark shadows which seem to move across the face of the sun and which at the height of their activity not only upset telecommunications but also our farmers' weather. They are vortices, or whirlpools, of swirling gases on the surface of the sun. Their apparent movement across the face of the sun is due to the sun revolving on its axis. Out of the funnel of such a vortex, from the depths of the sun, there is a volcanic eruption of atomic particles which produce the signals and which, when they collide with our atmosphere, cause disturbing effects. They upset the electric layers which enclose the earth like a ceiling and reflect back the earth's radio transmissions to make reception possible. When such particles are caught in the earth's magnetic field at the Poles they act on an atmosphere like the electrons passing through the gases of tube lighting; they make the gases in the atmosphere luminous and give us the fantasia of the Aurora.

During an August night last year, Lovell and his colleagues Clegg and Ellyett, a New Zealander, were distracted from their meteor chasing by the stage-effects of the Aurora. They turned their radar transmitters on to it and were able to measure the height of one of the Aurora trailers. They found it was three hundred miles above the earth. This is about twice as high as the Appleton Layer which reflects back short-wave transmissions.

Galactic noise is interference which is supposed to originate in the Milky Way. Other stars, like the sun, are transmitting. But recently there have been discoveries, which observations at Jodrell Bank may presently help to establish and explain. Radar detectors (including some very pretty work in Australia) have discovered signals coming from centres where there are no visible stars. As far as optical astronomy goes, they are coming from the void. These signals left the source hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years ago, and have only just reached the earth. Are they the last will and testament of a vanished star or are they birth cries of a star unborn? That is the exciting question for our astro-philosophers. It may be that they are the evidence of free atoms mobilising to form a new heavenly body.

The "fairground" at Jodrell Bank is now becoming respectable. Manchester University has recognised its privilege of fathering this new branch of science, and is setting up permanent buildings and providing equipment which will make this by far and away the most powerful radar transmission centre in the world. And Ashby's botanists and Lovell's physicists are in amiable competition, and giant masts sprout alongside the prize crops. Ashby, who was Commonwealth scientific officer in Moscow during the war, swops botanical lore for Lovell's echoes.

The visual astronomers now have a giant telescope at Mount Palomar with a 200in. reflector which has brought so many new nebulæ and stars into view that it is estimated that it will take the astronomers about 300 years to chart them. That is the visible night sky. Think of the daylight astronomers who can not only detect the visible but also the invisible! As someone has said of Jodrell, "I know a bank on which the Space Time grows."

RITCHIE CALDER

BLADES OF GRASS

THE King of Brobdingnag "gave it as his opinion," it will be remembered, that "whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together." A simple prescription; but, if one discounts the Augustan bias against "politicians," *i.e.*, a centralised government, it is as relevant to-day as it was in the half-starved Ireland of the eighteenth century. Indeed, it is almost exactly what Sir John Boyd Orr has been saying to the new International Federation of Agricultural Producers at Paris, and elsewhere these last few weeks. Here, for example, is an extract from the lecture he gave at London University in May: "The conclusion of the seventeen nations who considered the matter from November, 1946 to March, 1947, was that in the next 25 years food production would need to be *doubled* to meet the justifiable demands of the world." Orr added that "the best way to prevent a spread of Communism is to eliminate hunger and poverty, on which it breeds."

But Swift's formula needs to be restated in modern terms. The Brobdingnagian analysis, correct as far as it went, was incomplete. It is not enough merely to double crop-yields per acre. The real objective must be to double the world's total food production without interfering unduly with other claims upon the world's manpower and raw materials; in other words, the increases must be obtained as *cheaply* as possible. Unfortunately making two ears of corn grow where one grew before, though, technically relatively easy, is an extremely expensive business. This is because farm crops are subject to the Law of Diminishing Returns. If you apply a hundredweight of sulphate of ammonia to wheat that is being grown without dung on a soil of average fertility, you will raise the final yield of grain by about 3 cwts. But a second bag of sulphate of ammonia will only push up the yield by a further 1.8 cwts, a third bag will only add another 1.0 cwt, a fourth 0.7 cwt, a fifth 0.4 cwt, and so on. At some point, therefore, in the series it will always be cheaper to manure two acres lightly rather than one intensively. And for most of the standard farm crops that point is reached long before twice the average yield per acre can be anticipated.

If Swift could hardly be expected to be familiar with the Law of Diminishing Returns, since it was not formulated until 1823, a similar ignorance is less venial in our modern Britain-can-feed-itself boys, like Lt.-Col. G. P. Pollitt, Mr. Victor Collins, Lord Bledisloe and the Communist Party (self-sufficiency makes strange bedfellows). These starry-eyed enthusiasts simply evade the economic issue. Pollitt and Collins, for example, propose to eliminate grazing altogether and hand-feed the cattle with freshly cut grass. The idea is to prevent the usual waste of grass from trampling, dunging and over-eating,

ut it is bound to make milk production nearly as xpensive in summer as it is now in winter. The xford Milk Investigation Scheme has demonstrated that the average cost of a cow's food is rom 50 to 250 per cent. higher in the winter onths than in the summer. Deliberately and, it were, in cold blood to throw overboard these ummer savings in food costs—£9 or so per cow, ver £30 millions per annum for the national herd —is surely to lose all touch with agricultural ealities.

This is not to suggest that the English farmer already pulling his full economic weight. igher yields and heavier stocking are both posble and desirable. But they must not be obained in defiance of the Law of Diminishing eturns, but by pushing production up to the oint where the Law begins to operate. Recent othamsted findings suggest that for cereals and otatoes the optimum increase, as far as this ountry as a whole is concerned, cannot be much ore than 15 per cent. over the present yields. he one crop from which astronomic increases f output may still be possible is grass. Dr. illiam Davies, Sir George Stapledon's princial lieutenant, has described two thirds of our .2 million acres of permanent grass as practilly derelict, "providing little more than air and ercise for the stock turned out to it," and his rdict, which coincides with that reached by the ommunist Party's live-wire agricultural group, that we should plough up and crop 6½ million res as soon as possible.

Some further ploughing-up is certainly necesry, but our eccentric farm layouts make nonnse of a good deal of Dr. Davies's programme. In fect he is allowing each farm an average of only per cent. of its total acreage in permanent grass. ow field-by-field surveys by some of the County gricultural Executive Committees have shown nclusively that, when allowance is made for me pastures, "corridors" (fields connecting one rt of a farm with the rest), really good grass, d steep, boggy, very rough and very small lds, at least a quarter of each farm, on the aver-e, is best left in permanent grass. Moreover good chunk of the 10.2 million acres of peranent grass only exists on paper. When you me to examine individual farms, you find that hat is returned as permanent grass often inudes buildings, yards, roads, hedges, ditches, hall copses, and even the farmhouse garden. I ould be surprised if the ploughable area in the nited Kingdom exceeds 2 million acres.

To the ley-farming hot-gospellers the first comandment has always been "Thou shalt take e plough round the farm." It must have been ideal plough on a mystical farm. On real rms the plough always gets stuck half-way und. And the productivity of permanent grass n, of course, be raised in other ways than by oughing. A legacy of the years of factory farmg before the war—"putting in the cake one end d taking out the milk the other," as the wag put —is the low standard of grassland management at is now almost universal. The refinements n only come gradually. The mental machinery the "B" farmer grinds slowly, and it will be ars before "on-and-off" grazing, rotation of wing, spring grazing and autumn grazing, or periodic "topping" of the coarse grass with nowing machine become the general practice.

There are, however, two immediate grassland ssibilities that can go a long way before they n foul of the Law of Diminishing Returns. e is silage-making, now booming as it has never omed before in this country, which can reduce nsiderably the waste of grass in the flush periods. e other is stepping up the liming and manuring grassland. The war-time rationing scheme for tilisers excluded any potash or phosphates for rmanent grass, and many fields are now suffer from mineral starvation. On these fields at rate, with the help perhaps of the fertiliser tributors of the Agricultural Executive Comttees, there is an unassailable economic case for wing two blades of grass where only one grew ore.

F. W. BATESON

VISIT TO THE U.S.A.

THE handsome police dog at home is allowed to attend breakfast; he sits beside my father's chair and begs most elegantly. The meal was well advanced when my father looked across at me and said: "You're not eating—what's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing," I replied, in a small, strained voice. "You've just fed a month's bacon ration to the dog."

It was my first morning at home after eight years in London, and I had not yet made the necessary adjustments to the glare and lushness of the U.S.A.

"But, damn it," said my father, "I do all the things they ask me to do. I contribute, I send food parcels. I'd be perfectly willing to do with less myself if anybody could show me a way I could get it to anybody; after all, no matter what we do, there seems to go on being plenty here."

There does, indeed; and, quite apart from vast organisational networks, millions of parcels leave the United States bound for Europe, from private sources, every week. It is only against this background of generosity, and the genuinely idealistic "United Nations" thinking of the immediate post-war period that one can understand Americans' mental confusion when they realise that there is a certain amount of resentment in the minds of the receivers, or that suspicion can exist regarding America's motives, either economically or politically.

To the simple, the Marshall Plan is their food parcel, writ large. To the business man it's an obviously bad risk that history has trapped the U.S. into taking. To very few is its potential in terms of political and economic power clear. They're just helping everybody to get back on the one and only track of free enterprise.

Yet doubts persist. "Do you think it'll work," people ask earnestly. "We're perfectly willing to do it, but we just don't understand how it's going to work." They can go on reading their daily press for a long time without finding out.

In large measure, the bewilderment and misconceptions current in the United States, though they spring from many sources, are chiefly traceable to one—the over-simplification which results from ruling out all economic planning. If the American way doesn't work, you are not facing an alternative, you are facing a blank wall. It's quite simple; you have democracy (almost universally used as synonymous with capitalism) on one side, and on the other you have varying degrees of error, ranging from Socialism in Britain to the final, unexplained horror of an omnipotent Kremlin which functions with an accuracy and scope that, if it were capable of accomplishment, would bring tears of joy to Stalin's eyes.

Only when the press and radio, during the Italian election campaign, became so blatantly careless in their handling of the story that a child could not have missed it, did the average American citizen become aware that "we are interfering with an election in a foreign country." The rights or wrongs of doing so can be left aside; it was the fact itself that came as a shock to him. The Bedell Smith-Molotov blunder, and the Wallace-Stalin follow-up produced rather the same sort of bewildered concern.

"Well, even if it did no good, we might as well talk—hell, we don't want war. Couldn't do any harm to talk, could it? Always thought it was the Russians who wouldn't. Us not talk!"

The only articulate expression of public opinion during my stay was on Palestine. People quite definitely did not like the Warren Austin statement abandoning partition; so President Truman made amends by attempting to arrange trusteeship and recognising Israel simultaneously. Which was all right with the public, and in no way alters the nasty fact that anti-Semitism and inter-racial problems generally are more serious than ever.

Stupid, contradictory, childish, smug? No; often as one is tempted to use them, they are not the right words. On the contrary, never did plenty net smaller satisfaction, never did prosperity inspire such widespread frustration, never—except in pre-war Europe—have I seen people so subconsciously apprehensive. Unformulated though it is, fear is the word which comes to mind most often.

The clubman who tells you with relish that if you take off the top label of a certain well-known brand of dog-food you'll find a Russian label underneath—"Sure, shipped millions of cans of it under Lend-lease, food for the Russkies"—is afraid. The executive who informs a distinguished European Socialist that, as he's from such and such a country, "of course you're a Communist, and if you're a Communist you're taking your orders from Moscow; you think we Americans are dumb, but we learn fast, we learn fast"—he, too, is afraid. The friend who tells you that her son in the Mediterranean fleet writes that the American sailors are so unpopular in Italy that it's dangerous to give the men shore leave—is confused and afraid. The shy negro porter in your Pullman car, who turns out to be a University graduate, is afraid. The man who asks—"Do you think we can win a war against Russia?"—is disconcerted when you answer, "Certainly; you can probably acquire the whole world to feed and administer, if that's what you want." I have rarely seen such a look of despair as greeted my doubts whether Western Europeans in their present state would "make good allies in a war against Russia."

Not that those Americans want war; they don't. It's just one of the fears, along with inflation—the fear of having the witch-hunt go on, and the fear of not having the witch-hunt go on.

Awkwardly, slowly, beset with a gigantic list of problems within and without, with not much help from anyone, in the midst of lavish plenty, the American is beginning to think in political terms. The Right-Left polarisation is beginning. The Right is, and will continue to be, rigid and ruthless; the Left minority, albeit surprisingly widespread and enlightened, still has much to learn. The wide belt of people in the middle, of whom I have written, can move in either direction, depending on events. But it will probably be toward the Right.

Certainly, politics in the U.S. is ceasing to be a parlour game. America has had its mouth pushed open, and is acutely conscious that it has swallowed a great deal that it doesn't understand, and whose taste it dislikes. But the process of digestion has begun.

ELSA KNIGHT THOMPSON

The Arts and Entertainment

THE THEATRE

Stratford Revisited

The Stratford Season has never been so successful. The notice boards at the Memorial Theatre announce the house to be fully booked up until the middle of July, and, since all seats are bookable in advance, casual visitors can only hope—and that rather doubtfully—to find standing room. Perhaps, as a result of this success, the Governors will be able to modify their present practice next year and leave some proportion of the seats (at least in the gallery) for booking on the day of performance. Meanwhile, the success is certainly deserved and the credit must go partly to the Director for bringing in names that draw and partly to Mr. Michael Benthall for his exciting productions. Having praised these unreservedly on my last visit, I feel justified this time in raising some complaints. A lively contemporary, *Theatre News*, has recently published a violent attack on Mr. Benthall, complaining that he loses both the text and the actors in his concern for picture and movement. But a third viewing of the *Hamlet* re-

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inforces my opinion that this, at least, is a remarkably successful production. There have certainly been better Hamlets and as good productions; but a producer works with the material at his disposal and given these actors and this (by no means easy) theatre, Mr. Benthall seems to me to have found an excellent way of combining his elements.

On the other hand, it is certainly true that throughout this season, popping up its head here, there and everywhere, there is a bad vice even if it is one that is venial in youth. There is an abundance of talent, vitality and cleverness at Stratford this year, but there is a certain amount of silliness as well. Personally, I can't pretend to care much what anyone does with *The Taming of the Shrew* (except that I do resent the indiscipline of Petruchio and the Shrew enjoying a private joke throughout the performance). But the first act of *King John* was stained with a number of puerilities which Mr. Benthall will, in ten years time we hope, blush for. Bad enough when the leading citizen of Angiers was made a figure of farce with the voice of a piping idiot: but when his second is allowed to raise cheap laughs with a comic stutter, it was intolerable. So, too, the appearance of Austria, the Bastard's attendant, the pantomime tone in which the King of France blessed the engagement of the Dauphin—these are vulgarities which it is excusable to try out in rehearsal, but which one moment's second thought ought to have expunged from the performance. A pity, for otherwise this production makes the very most of the play, the pageantry is highly effective and dramatically helpful, the dresses by Miss Audrey Cruddas strikingly beautiful, and there were three first-rate performances, Mr. Helpmann's John, Miss Ena Burrill's Constance, and Mr. Quayle's Bastard.

The sillinesses, in short, are only excrescences which time will no doubt cure. But in *The Winter's Tale*, another rash, intermittently observed before, spread over the whole head of the performance. An almost total inaudibility. Granted *The Winter's Tale* is a curious failure, only given out of a necessary piety; but imagine the first part conducted as it was when I saw it, virtually—I am not exaggerating—in dumb show! Is anything so infuriating as sitting straining to catch a mumble that one never quite catches? Yet, since nothing critics say ever seems to make any difference to the obstinacy of producers in this matter, the only remedy lies now with the audience, who on this occasion were far too polite.

It is particularly regrettable to have to comment so harshly on this, the first of Mr. Quayle's productions; for, besides showing himself a very notable actor throughout this season, he has been appointed to succeed Sir Barry Jackson as Director. This will not be the excellent appointment it seemed to be if the standard of speaking at Stratford is to fall so deplorably low as it did in this play (and now and then in others). It was disappointing, too, that Mr. Esmond Knight was here one of the chief offenders, for he makes himself heard elsewhere and altogether has done excellent work in this season, indeed proves himself to be one of the most dependable and versatile feature actors we have. It is only fair to excuse from the charge of inaudibility Mr. Helpmann, Mr. Quayle himself, and both Mr. John Kidd and Mr. John Justin, two other staunch members of the company, who can always be relied on to give a solidly good performance in each of their parts.

The second of Mr. Quayle's productions is *Troilus and Cressida*, and this combined the good and bad points of the present season. The dresses of the Greeks, for instance, are a pun, so to speak, on the Afrika Korps, and this seems to me a piece of "cleverness" which is not far from silly. And surely to switch Pandarus's last speech and bring down the curtain with the picture of Troilus announcing Hector's death is to end up by contradicting the whole anti-romantic bias of the play for the sake of an admittedly good curtain. In any case, the effect of this was ruined because Troilus, in an attempt to be moving, dropped his voice far out of hearing; there are actors who can most effectively use a whisper, but they are actors whose whispers can be heard. This Troilus is not one of them. Still, on the whole, this production exhibited the virtues of the season as far exceeding its defects. The company plays well together and the general level of the performances is high throughout, as we see especially in some of the lesser-known names, such as Mr. William Squire's Ulysses, Mr. Douglas Wilmer's Achilles, and Mr. Noel Willman's Pandarus. Above all here, there is invention and enthusiasm, pace and vigour, liveliness and freshness.

"Lions After Slumber," at the Unity
"Ambassador Extraordinary," at the Aldwych

Unity's new play is an American *pièce à thèse* (the Communist *thèse*) almost as neat, tight and effective as *All My Sons* but much more overtly political. (It almost looks as if the American Drama courses are beginning to turn out a standard model and a danger lurks here: too heavy a price can be exacted for neatness, tightness and efficiency.) In *Lions After Slumber* the conflict is between middle-age and youth: middle-age clinging to the individualism in the shape of a one-man business (wicked!), and the young reaching out to collectivism by starting a union and ending up on a picket line on a winter afternoon (noble!). This struggle is dexterously translated into the personal terms of family life, but the end is a little weak and the scales grossly loaded against the middle-aged. But even those who are not convinced by the moral equation may be moved by the situations which develop between parents and children. The producer (David Bell) has got his cast speaking better than ever before, though the actor playing the father would quadruple his effect if he could trust himself enough to use the pause. It is in action and gesture that this cast is not happy yet. But, as usual, at this theatre the roughnesses are fitted into a very finished frame of production and lighting.

Political satire from whatever side might easily receive a warm welcome in the theatre just now. Unfortunately, Douglas Home who has been brave enough to try it in *Ambassador Extraordinary* does not yet carry enough guns of wit, style or invention to bring it off. A pity, for he isn't vulgar, stupid or crudely partisan. But he arouses too many expectations and satisfies too few. The brink of war between East and West? All right—but not on this tame tea-cup level. An ambassador from Mars? Certainly: and the appearance of this creature is striking enough—until he speaks. Then we are consistently let down. Mars apparently has nothing to offer us except his torso and a million atom bombs. The mild amusements of the first half are all incidental and add nothing to the theme; after that the play sadly and slowly folds up.

T. C. WORSLEY

ALAN RAWSTHORNE

THE Cheltenham Festival was an ambitiously planned and admirably executed fortnight of English music, provided for the most part by the sprightly English Opera Group and by the rich-toned Hallé under their fiery conductor John Barbirolli. In more spacious times it would have been a pleasant task to discuss in detail the many novelties and quasi-novelties of the Festival; as things are, in order to do the barest justice to Alan Rawsthorne's new and fascinating Violin Concerto, I must confine myself to a word of admiration for Britain's infinitely various treatment of *The Beggar's Opera* tunes, and a question whether anything very valuable is to be found in either William Wordsworth's String Quartet or Arthur Benjamin's Symphony. The latter work is marred by a crudity of handling which derives (I can't help suspecting, in spite of the composer's half-hearted disclaimer) from a concealed programme in which the violence of our time is imperfectly digested into purely musical beauty; whereas the E minor Symphony of Vaughan Williams, as the whole Cheltenham audience seemed to feel, has achieved precisely this process with complete and astonishing success.

Alan Rawsthorne is a totally different case; he has no need to disavow a programme, because we should never think of suspecting one. He is the most absolute of our leading composers, hardly tempted as yet by poetry or the voice, wholly absorbed in the weaving of instrumental design for its own sake. A Rawsthorne score looks almost like a piece of consummate book-keeping, nothing wasted, everything balanced and accounted for and guaranteed to tell, if only the conductor knows his business as well as the composer. The texture is not at all thin, like a typical French score of the twenties, but it is always beautifully aerated—by which I mean that there is so much air and space between and around the strands of counterpoint that we can easily discover how many of these strands are truly melodic in their own right. He is a natural contrapuntalist and a natural master of form; eschewing the loose, untidy gestures which hint at dubious profundities, he always says something definite which proves, on closer acquaintance, to ring with the accents of modest truth. Modesty has been a feature of the works which Rawsthorne has written during the last ten years, all beautifully finished pieces of craftsmanship, not at all dry, but undeniably cool in emotional temperature. One or two sections of the 1938 Theme and Variations for Two Violins, notably its *Notturno*, contained a note of fervour, even of passion, which has lain dormant ever since—only to reappear now, in an altogether richer and larger context, in the new Violin Concerto.

There are only two movements, of which the first is a most delicately sustained piece of poetic thought worthy to rank with the first movement of Walton's Viola Concerto. The new work is in fact dedicated to Walton, and contains, on its last page, an explicit quotation from *Belshazzar's Feast*, inserted "as a tribute to the Master"; furthermore, whether by intention or not, the main theme of the second movement bears a marked resemblance to the fugue-subject in the last movement of Walton's Symphony. If you can imagine a symphonic piece of Walton with the violence exorcised and the characteristic boxer's side-stepping rhythms excluded, that will give you a rough impression of Rawsthorne's manner in this Violin Concerto; and yet I don't wish to suggest that he has written a derivative work. On the contrary, to those who know Rawsthorne's earlier music, almost every page bears his fingerprints: the liking for *Siciliano* rhythms used with an effect of whimsical pathos, the peculiar unquiet grace of harmony resulting from the presence of so many parts chromatically on the move, the attractive quince-like astringency of the orchestral sound. Besides all this, however, there is really something new in this long first movement, for in it Rawsthorne has found the secret which all composers pray for—that of unwinding music effortlessly, like silk from the reel. The unity of mood is extraordinary: there is little of the customary dualism of sonata form, the second subject being merely what the first was bound to lead to when pushed far enough. It is this first subject which sets the emotional tone: a gentle, loping, sinuous 9/8 melody which at once unseals, alike for composer and listener, the springs of nostalgic emotion. Tempo, metre and mood have much in common with one of Elgar's most beautiful inventions, the first subject of his Cello Concerto: there is the same resignation, the same air of contemplative leisure, the same sense of beginning a long story about something set back at precisely the right distance from the present moment. Once established, the mood is never broken; two wide curves—a larger and a lesser one with a cadenza in between—complete a wonderfully satisfying design.

At first acquaintance I must admit that the second movement seemed a little less unified and inevitable. It contains one of those miniature fugal expositions so short that we wonder (like the tombstone elegist), if it was so soon to be done for, what it was ever begun for; the Waltonesque theme mentioned above introduces a stretch of that jaunty, angular, brittle kind of writing which, attractive and shapely as it is, seems to belong rather to the world of *Street Corner* than to the elevated sphere of this Concerto; and the movement often drops back into slow tempo and a more lyrical vein, as if that were where its heart really lay. Perhaps—were it not for the loose associations of such a title—the composer might have cast his whole work into a single movement and called it a Rhapsody. However, these are only first impressions, which time is certain to modify. In any case, the Concerto makes a memorable and beautiful contribution to the literature of the violin, which deserves to be widely played, and recorded for the gramophone at once; preferably by Theo Olof, the young Dutch violinist who played it at Cheltenham with noble tone, extreme refinement of style and a complete awareness of its uncommon quality.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RADIO NOTES

The Soviet Idea, recently broadcast in the Third Programme, was admirably objective; the distinguished speakers appeared to me to discuss their chosen aspects of the subject without heat or prejudice and with the plain intention of finding the truth. But perhaps "objective" must now be added to those other words, of which "democracy" is the current conspicuous example, which have one meaning west of Berlin, another east of it. For in the interesting discussion on the series between Mr. Palme Dutt and Mr. Christopher Hollis, Mr. Dutt's first words were to attack the speakers as antagonistic to the Soviet Union and to suggest that if an objective account of the Soviet idea were wanted, then the people to call in were the Dean of Canterbury, Professor Haldane and Professor Levy. Plainly, objectivity is a quality less easily recognised and less easily come by than one had supposed; and that this should be so is an index of the enormous difficulties the B.B.C. is up against whenever it attempts to stage discussion on really controversial matters, such as the Soviet idea. In spite of the fact that any kind of agreement between them was impossible, the debate between Mr. Hollis and Mr. Dutt was a rewarding event if only as an exhibition of debating at a high level.

Interestingly enough, the Dutt-Hollis discussion was almost immediately preceded by the discussion of another highly controversial issue, the part played by the Roman Catholic Church in politics. But there the technique used was that of independent statements for and against the practice of the Church. While recognising that political Catholicism represents the opinions of only a section of Catholics, Mr. Geoffrey Barraclough put the liberal, noncomformist case against the traditional role of Catholicism in politics with a vigour that took one back to one's childhood, when the Pope was the bogy under the bed. Mr. A. C. F. Beale's excellent defence of the Church was, on the level which he chose to conduct it, convincing; but I doubt if he convinced Mr. Barraclough or the majority of his non-Catholic listeners.

Both these broadcasts made very good intellectual entertainment. Indeed, they were much better entertainment than were the programmes specifically designed to delight rather than edify. The most important radio play of the week, *Leaves from a Journal*, was a considerable achievement only in that it succeeded in doing what one had hitherto believed impossible—making Marie Bashkirtseff a bore. This adaptation of Marie's journal was poor entertainment because it was poor radio, and it was poor radio because Miss Vera Larina's adaptation had not been carried nearly far enough. Neither a dramatisation of the *Journal* nor a straight reading, it hovered uneasily between the two. It existed, as it were, in three layers. First, there was a narrator, of whom there was far too much. Then there was Marie herself, played by Miss Mary Morris, a thankless part since most of the time she was not permitted to act but had merely to read from the *Journal*. Then, sandwiched in between this double narration, were the dramatic interludes, which almost inevitably appeared perfunctory, as though they were there only because Miss Larina remembered from time to time that a change of voice might be desirable. The programme interested, of course, because one heard large chunks of the *Journal*, and it is obvious that a superb radio play could be written about Marie Bashkirtseff.

WILLIAM SALTER

THE MOVIES

"L'Idiot," at the Continentale
"La Ferme du Pendu," at the Academy

Readers of Mr. Ernest Lindgren's *The Art of the Film* (Allen & Unwin, 16s.) will find a serious, plain-spoken, and detailed discussion of the ways and means by which films are produced. So much craft and so little art goes to their making that we may sometimes wonder, with a good film, how individuality survives. Whose individuality? Mr. Lindgren in a number of well-defined chapters assigns the responsibility. The director's comes first: an Eisenstein film or a Clair film is Eisenstein's or Clair's, nobody else's. Yet others, indispensably, have helped. After the director come in importance the editor and the script-writer, names often overlooked in the interminable title list; and so on down the scale to continuity-girls and clapper-boys. To each Mr. Lindgren prescribes his task, his place, as it were, in the field. No one who has read *The Art of the Film* will remain in any doubt as to *how* films are produced. But one source of the essential impulse has, it seems to me, been overlooked; and that is the original novel (usually it is a novel) from which the film has been taken. Mr. Lindgren dislikes this second-handness and believes that the film in itself is capable of development to "more than Shakespearean" heights. That may or may not be. As things are the author still plays at times an all-important part.

L'Idiot, directed by George Lampin, is very much a Dostoevsky film. Of all the great writers, including Dickens and Shakespeare, who have tempted the film-maker, Dostoevsky seems to me by far the most adaptable. *L'Idiot* reinforces the impression made by his other novels filmed. Of course, not the whole book is there; who could expect or wish it? The cinema informs us quickly or not at all. But while with the Dickens adaptations at their best I never lost a sense of the original pages flipped over expertly forty or fifty at a time, Dostoevsky's characters and situations detach themselves from print. There may be gaps, jumps, wobblings in the action; the fever of invention may have been transmuted into cool if seizing terms; *crescendo* tends to become *accelerando*. What does that matter if the characters live and the situations tell? And in *L'Idiot* they do, from beginning to end, thrillingly tell. The apparently impossible has been achieved with a Prince Myshkin whose guilelessness, charm, and inspiration walk the screen as naturally as does Chaplin's tramp. If the physical concomitants of epilepsy and breakdown have been dropped, the essence remains, and M. Gerard Philippe triumphs as the Idiot; to radiate positive goodness—never to embarrass or impose—must surely be one of the most difficult feats an actor can undertake. M. Phillipe has that instinct for the part which Olivier, for example, despite skill and feeling, failed to bring to his Hamlet. Exact casting no less than fine acting (one must record especially Mlle Edwige Feuillère's spirited Nastasia) have ensured the success of *L'Idiot*, which is completed by a graceful restraint in the direction. All praise to M. Lampin, who has brilliantly transmitted a sense of his original. It can hardly be accident that Dostoevsky should inspire directors while other novelists do not. The reason can only be that when these enormous books have been sliced to the marrow—as all screen adaptation of this order involves—there still persists enough of common humanity, drama, spiritual crisis and popular "go" to illuminate the screen for a couple of hours.

Jean Dreville's *La Ferme du Pendu* (1945) is a very different matter from that other piece of his which has been seen in London: the gay and touching *Cage Aux Rossignols*. Those who attributed to him then an artless charm will have to revise their opinion, for this second film at the Academy is a mature, Zola-esque and on the whole beautifully calculated study of peasant life in a genre which fascinated French directors after the war. *Farrebique* gave us the most hopeful, *Goupi Mains Rouges* the most hateful, view of the slow break-up in a stubborn tradition. The impact is revealed here in the tragic-comedy of a family which holds to its property like grim death. Other obsessions, of sex and escape, branch out of this parent mania. With some gusto we are introduced to local manners and landscapes in the Vendée. The film is very well acted and photographed, and only falters in giving a wriggle too many at the end.

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The Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy

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Correspondence

OXFORD

SIR,—Your contributor, who signs himself "Oxonian," may think himself justified in dispensing with logic; but I wish that in his references to my book he had paid a little more attention to truth.

His main charge against me is that I "exclude" value judgments; and because of this he makes me partly responsible for the re-appearance of Fascists in Oxford. Even if his premiss were true, his reasoning would be questionable, but his premiss is false. I do not "exclude" value judgments. What I do is to distinguish them from judgments of fact. And this view, so far from favouring Fascism, runs counter to it. For it is characteristic of Fascist theory to try to deduce statements of value from statements of fact; it tries, for example, to make questions of right depend upon questions of race or power. And one of the purposes of my argument was to expose the logical fallacy that is involved in any undertaking of this sort.

Your contributor goes on to say that the philosophy of logical positivism encourages an "anti-aesthetic Philistinism" on the ground that "it reduces intellectual activity to a kind of artisanship." He gives no evidence in support of these statements, which seem to me entirely baseless. I should be glad to know which passages in my book he had in mind when he made them.

I think that if your contributor were to study the question historically, he would find that Fascists have hitherto tended to favour some form of metaphysics, and that they have been hostile to positivist ideas, in so far as they were aware of them at all. And while I do not know who these Oxford Fascists are, I imagine that the same is true of them. I should be astonished to learn that many of them had been influenced by "Language, Truth and Logic," or even that many of them had read it. Your contributor, presumably, has read it, since he attacks it. I am dismayed that he should have so much mistaken its purport.

A. J. AYER

University College, London, W.C.1.

SIR,—It seems that three days was too short for Oxonian to acquire more than a very superficial impression of political life at Oxford last term. The emphasis he laid on Fascism would be very disturbing, even if it were only partly justified. But happily he is mistaken in treating Mosleyite Oxford frivolities with any show of seriousness. The part Mosley himself plays in them is certainly negligible. It is true, of course, that the Leader, not the Master, as Oxonian thought he is called, has a few personal friends in the University. So have many other political oddities, but although I have looked very hard I have found nothing even insidiously respectable, nothing influential about the Leader's half-dozen satellites at Oxford. Last term there was only one of any reasonable notoriety, the editor of *Avant Garde*. He was amusing but far from plausible, and now he has gone down.

Oxonian found "the bias of controversial conversation is almost entirely in the direction of the Right Wing." All he heard about was "these Fascists or the Carlton Club." Now both these subjects are notorious, something to smile about, to beguile visitors with, to inspire an endless amount of cynical amusement. That is why Oxonian heard so much about them, not because anyone expected him to take them seriously. His remarks about the Labour Club cannot be left unanswered. I feel that it is very refreshing indeed that Oxford's Socialism no longer has to be reckoned in terms of vogues. As for earning the taint of respectability, it was a small price to pay for having rid ourselves of Communists and the S.L.F. More serious and more stable than it ever was in its "vogue" days, Socialism at Oxford must not be underestimated. The Labour Club's fortnightly periodical, *The Clarion*, is generally agreed to surpass any of the other political papers in the University. Moreover, at the Union there has recently been a considerable Leftward trend, and next term's President is a Socialist. In debates the majorities which condemn the Government have been much smaller than they used to be a few months ago; and although the dreadful "officer class" still turns up to sneer and smirk and vote in sufficiently large numbers to prevent a Socialist victory, very few of their number contrive to say anything that isn't vacuous.

Modern Oxford may be reluctant to make value judgments, but about its own peculiar Mosleyites I feel that the University wouldn't mind committing itself to, "These Fascists are silly."

Oxford University Labour Club. WILL CAMP,
Secretary

MALAYA

SIR,—Your timely warning against blind acceptance of the official version of what is happening in Malaya is most welcome. There is, however, that point about secret societies which creates a great deal of confusion and needs clearing up. In fairness to the political parties in Malaya and the trade unions the distinction between them and the secret society proper should be made known and understood.

It will be remembered that before the war friendly, benevolent and like societies were allowed a legal existence under the strict provisions of the Societies Laws. Political Societies as such, and trade unions, were forbidden legal operation and were of necessity underground. They were "secret": hence the terminological confusion which has tended to blur in the mind of the western observer the distinction between these trade union and political societies and the criminal secret society proper.

The huge organisation that is the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions with its 300,000 members is no mushroom growth but the result of years of sacrifice on the part of workers organised in these secret trade unions. And it will do no one any good to continue, as the Government does, in a campaign of slander and persecution which has recently culminated in the banning of the P.M.F.T.U. How the Government is going to convince the workers that it is working in their interests when they attack the very organisation to which they owe a historical allegiance is beyond my comprehension; and one can predict that the policy of building up yellow unions will fail.

Mr. Creech Jones is reported by *The Times* as saying: "(the British) had the task of making partnership no empty word, not a one-sided affair, but an effective principle of action . . ." As a colonial who has the privilege of living in a country where Mr. Creech Jones' actions have rather fallen out of step with his professed aims, may I point out that we still live under a system of government by an all powerful executive? Even in town administration not a single Municipal Commissioner is elected. Banishment is ruthlessly used and there is even a scheme afoot to extend its cold-blooded punishment to British subjects. Mr. Creech Jones is also aware no doubt of the Restricted Residence Enactment whereby a man may be ordered for the remainder of his days to live in a certain district without trial. The spirit of give and take is also painfully lacking in the stringent application of the laws of sedition: so afraid are the independent printers that none of them will dare undertake the printing of moderate criticisms of the Government.

LIM KEAN CHYE

FUTURE v. PAST IN HUNGARY

SIR,—I had the luck to be present at the interesting lecture given by Mr. Kingsley Martin in the reception room of the Hungarian Parliament where he explained in sober language the changed position, economic and strategic, of Britain since the war. Yet in his "Curtain Diary" I was unable to discover the same striking comparison of the present with the past as regards political and social life in Hungary.

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The greatest asset of any statesman in present-day Hungarian politics is not to have held any official position during the 25 years of Horthy régime which through its counter-revolutionary, feudal, pro-German and anti-Semitic tendency necessarily led to the collapse of the country at the end of World War II. Cardinal Mindszenty, this ecclesiastic of the medieval stature of Savonarola and Torquemada, may or may not raise the standard of revolt against the nationalisation of the schools, yet no one ignores the fact that, during the Nazi terror when several thousands of his fellow-countrymen, women, children and old people included, were sent to die in the gas-chambers, he never raised a word against these cruelties, not to speak of threatening their perpetrators and/or accomplices with excommunication. Every genuine Hungarian democrat, Communist or non-Communist, sees in the present head of the Catholic Church in Hungary not a prelate, but a politician, backed by counter-revolutionary elements in the country and reactionary forces centred and officially supported in the U.S.A.

That in order to raise the standard of life of the people, the standard of production must be raised (which latter involves a lot of austerity), is a truism not only in Hungary but in every war-stricken country. Workers and peasants, as well as white-collar workers have already understood it, former landlords and capitalist elements must understand it too. If you speak of Marxism in terms of religion then you must admit that in the eyes of a true Marxist to yearn after the past is one of the gravest mortal sins, and if a people, whose past is so teeming with sufferings and oppressions, is to merit a bright future, then it must drink of the water of Lethe and make *tabula rasa* of all outmoded encumbrances of the past.

Ponty utca 4. DR. ANDOR KARASZ,
Budapest, Hungary. *Attorney at Law.*

[Mr. Martin referred in strong terms, both in his lecture in Budapest and in his "Curtain Diary," to his pleasure and excitement in contrasting the constructive energy and able leadership of Hungary today with miseries and luxuries of the Horthy régime. —ED., *N.S. & N.*]

PRISON LIBRARIES

SIR,—It is difficult for me to argue with Mr. Benson, who has seen the inside of so many prisons. I hasten to add, in the most pleasant and blameless circumstances. I can only claim to know the inside of one. The experience was disagreeable and the circumstances blameworthy. I cannot write of the splendour of Strangeways, the comforts of Bedford, or the wonders of Leicester, but if the conditions I wrote about have ceased to exist in that hundred-year-old tomb during the short period which has elapsed since my release the age of miracles is still with us.

I would like to answer a few of Mr. Benson's statements.

Writing of prisoner librarians he states, "Pride in their work was very general and in many cases the indexing and carding were beautifully done." Of course, it was well done. Would they be so foolish as to run the risk of being sent back to the boredom and drudgery of mail-bags? "If a prisoner requires technical books for study they are obtained specially from the municipal library." I'm very glad to hear it. From November last year to March this year I do not know of a single book being obtained for this purpose from the County Library. I only know of two men out of approximately four hundred who studied a special subject. One was doing a carefully censored correspondence course. The other studied navigation. He found it easier and quicker to have his books sent in by relatives. To live three in a cell is not ideal for study, nor is the atmosphere a stimulant for the poet.

"Nor are books sent to prisoners always doled out one at a time." Oh yes they were, Mr. Benson. A register of all books and periodicals sent in to prisoners was kept in the library by one of the prisoner librarians. When the prisoner had finished a book or periodical he brought it back to the library. There it was checked in the register and, if he had any more, another was allowed him. If it was a question of books for study he made a special application to the Governor. Prisoners do not like making special applications. After a few weeks' imprisonment they realize they have no human rights.

"In Leicester the Governor has appointed two library visitors, whose job it is to talk to and advise prisoners about their reading." Very nice too, but quite impossible in the conditions I knew and described in my article. Here, let me assure Mr. Benson that I am not prejudiced against detective stories in the normal way, but as a crook, living amongst crooks, I like to read about other activities and people.

"It is not true that daily papers are prohibited." During the whole of my four months' residence I never once saw a daily paper. *It was prohibited.* I stated the true facts in my article. The very notion of the admittance of the *Daily Worker* is laughable. Perhaps Mr. Benson is joking?

I am unable to follow Mr. Benson's line of thought regarding the condition of the nine-year-old books. The facts I stated seem quite clear to me. But this question certainly calls for a reply. "Has A. J. L. ever heard of the shortage of lavatory paper that seemed to have affected all prisons during the war?" I know nothing about the shortage of lavatory paper in prisons during the war. I know all about the shortage during the peace. I know, too, all about the shortage of clean, decent lavatories in prison. I know what it is like when there is one water-closet for the use of from sixty to seventy men. I know the filthy smell which seeps from cells where chamber-pots have been used for all animal functions. I know all about living three in a cell and having to perform these functions in a confined space before two of one's fellows. Oh yes, Mr. Benson, there is a bell you can ring for the officer on duty, and sometimes you can ring till you are blue in the face. Other men are ringing too. I will never forget last Christmas evening. The prisoners' stomachs were well and truly upset by the unaccustomed richness of the very ordinary Christmas pudding. What a ringing of bells! What a shortage of lavatory paper! What a do! But how unfair and indelicate of me to write of such things when the Commissioners are "wrestling" and doing their best with their antiquated mausoleums!

But to return to prison libraries. Several weeks ago an Admiral visited the prison. I believe he was a visiting magistrate. In the course of his inspection he entered the so-called library. After making a few platitudes he turned to my fellow librarian and asked, "Er-is that set of 'Jorrocks' still in the library?" It was presented many years before the war. My colleague had no idea who or what "Jorrocks" was; but, being a man of no illusions and great presence of mind, he immediately assumed the half-witted, obsequious look which grows on one in prison and said, "Yes, sir." "Good, good," said the Admiral, "I bet they enjoy them, ha, ha!" And off he went happily convinced that this library was the best of all possible libraries. I leave the moral to Mr. Benson.

Lastly, Mr. Benson pontificates, "publicity is a healthy thing." I agree, but not for the discharged prisoner. It is on discharge that the worst part of his punishment begins. He leaves the prison gates full of hope and fine resolves, but it is not long before he begins to understand the bitter words of a great artist: "I never came across anyone in whom the moral sense was dominant who was not heartless, cruel, vindictive, log-stupid and entirely lacking in the smallest sense of humanity." Under my present unfortunate circumstances, it seems best, Sir, to leave the particulars of name and place in your hands.

A. J. L.

FARMING POLICY

SIR,—I am sure you would not wish your editorial comment on the Conservative Agricultural Charter to mislead your readers on matters of fact and I shall therefore be grateful if you will allow me to correct those impressions which you give that are inaccurate.

You say that "the Conservatives propose in effect

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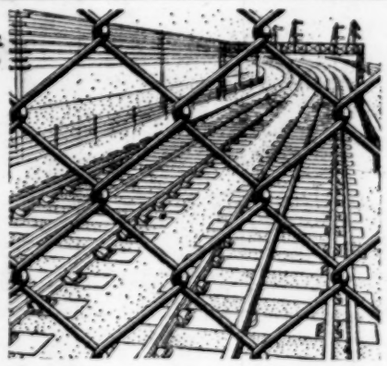

. . . broke through the fence and climbed on to the electric line . . . 514 chickens killed by fox . . . *climbed the gates and stole* £5,000 *worth of goods . . .* caught her hair in the machine . . .

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to give the farmer a high guaranteed price for whatever he may choose to produce," and that "it (the system of annual price reviews) is not meant to be used as an instrument for planning what is to be produced."

Nowhere in the Charter do we state or infer that we will give *high* prices for *whatever the farmer produces*, nor do we suggest that the use of the February price review shall no longer be used to steer production: indeed that is the main function of this system. What we do say in unequivocal terms is:—

> We want our agriculture to be capable of adapting itself to changing world conditions and consumer needs. When changes in the balance of production are required, we realise that they must be effected gradually, over a period of years, by introducing the necessary price changes, in consultation with the farmers, at the February price reviews. (Page 13.)
>
> In fixing the guaranteed prices, we favour the present system of the February price review. It takes into account other factors—such as consumer requirements, the level of agricultural profits, availability of overseas supplies and the economic condition of the whole country—as well as production costs. It has worked well in practice and should be continued. (Page 17.)

Your comment that the Charter would enable the farmer to charge what he pleased for whatever he wished to produce, and to get all the benefits of a state guarantee without the corresponding obligations is simply untrue. As regards the obligations I again quote the Charter:—

> We intend to sponsor a fully productive agriculture and will give the British farmer real confidence in the future by guaranteeing prices and markets for all the food that he can produce, *in accordance with the rules of good husbandry*, up to our overall target. (Page 17.)

Elsewhere we accept the sanctions of supervision and ultimate dispossession provided by the 1947 Act for those who break the rules of good husbandry.

> Good farmers do not need cropping direction and for the case of the bad farmer the Government's powers of dispossession and supervision under the 1947 Agriculture Act . . . should be quite sufficient. (Page 36.)

E. D. O'BRIEN
Director of Information Services
Conservative and Unionist Central Office.

[Naturally, the Charter does not *say* that the Conservatives will give high prices for whatever the farmer produces; but that is pretty well what it comes to. The only noteworthy exception we can find is the extreme case of sugar beet. The Charter proposes to extend guaranteed prices to oats and wool, and insists again and again on the need to "give the British farmer real confidence in the future by guaranteeing prices and markets for all the food that he can produce, in accordance with the rules of good husbandry, up to our overall target"—which is set so high, for nearly everything, as to impose no real limit. If this does not mean high prices, what does it mean? Prices sufficient for the marginal producer at a high total output *are* high prices. As for the annual price review, the writer of the letter has doubtless been misled by an unfortunate misprint in our note. The word "rational" should have been "retained": we meant to point out that the Conservatives propose to retain the annual price review, but the misprint, for which we apologise, distorted the sense.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

EMBANKMENT EXHIBITION

SIR,—Mr. Stephen Bone's review of the L.C.C. sponsored exhibition of paintings in Embankment Gardens ignores an aspect which should be brought to public notice, namely, that though the majority of professionally known artists could not see their way to support the exhibition, a few, though not the greatly known, came with their best, and materially helped to indicate the sincerity of true artists. They turned what could have easily become a penny-farthing display into an exhibition inspected by hundreds of thousands in a few days.

We members of the Borough Group recognise that Mrs. Pat Strauss gave us a grand opportunity to come before the people with our best. Unhappily no adequate provision for the protection of our paintings in bad weather was provided: also the "first come, first served" idea involved us and the others in a form of trench warfare. But artists who live for their art and not for their reputations only should have taken that opportunity and not been put off by the conditions. We should have been happy to share our tarpaulins with other artists of renown and distinction had they come out to join us.

We appreciate the Hon. Secretary of the Contemporary Art Society who came out to support us the first day.

The general public have not had the experience to estimate the quality of the best in contemporary painting; therefore until they are so experienced others must act for them, and we believe that public bodies such as the T.U.C., the Co-operatives, Public Galleries, local Boroughs, Ministries, and Arts Council, the L.C.C. and evening Institutes, should have supported by purchase where merit was obvious.

I will be glad if you can see your way to publish this letter and give testimony of these facts from ten members of the Borough Group and the many other sincere artists taking part in this exhibition.

DAVID BOMBERG,
President of the Borough Group

GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT

SIR,—Your film critic in his review of "Gentleman's Agreement" surprisingly thinks Jews "like to keep their own racial identity while sharing their neighbours' privileges." What privileges does he consider they should expect to forego because they remain Jews? He would appear to be offering to Jews (and to other groups who do not share his "racial identity") a second-class citizenship which they do, and he should, reject as undemocratic. I. PUSHKIN
Workers' Circle Friendly Society.

[Several other letters have reached us raising the same point. Reference is made to this correspondence in the London Diary.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WHY NATIONALISE STEEL?

SIR,—There is a mistake in my pamphlet *Why Nationalise Steel?* which, though it in no way affects the argument, I had better correct. On page 19, the figure for consumption in 1927—6½ million tons—refers not to the year 1927, but to the average of the five years ending in 1927. The figures for 1926-1927 (which have to be taken together because of the 1926 strike) is 7 million tons. In the new edition of the pamphlet the passage will be amended to read as follows:—

> Ten years earlier, consumption had been running at 7-8 million tons, and before 1914, 5 millions. Between the middle 'twenties and 1937, it rose by about 50 per cent.: if it had gone on rising at the same rate until now, it would have reached about 18 million tons."

I apologise for the error. G. D. H. COLE

BONESETTERS' CHARM

SIR,—The bonesetters' charm quoted by Freda White in her article on the Renaissance in Scotland, is evidently a Christian adaptation of a much older pagan charm.

In its 10th century German version (Merseburger Sprüche) it is not Our Lord, but Wodan and Balder who ride out together. Balder's foal sprains its ankle whereupon Wodan addresses it with these magic words: ben zi bena, blvot zi blvoda, lid zi gilidin, sose gelimida sin, i.e., bone to bone, blood to blood, limb to limb, as if joined with glue.

Seaham Harbour. DURHAM PITMAN

R.L.S. AND GAS

SIR,—I well remember the Jablockoff lamps in Paris in 1880. By that time, thanks to alternating current and frosted glass, they had overcome the defects which Mr. Todd describes, and appeared most beautiful to eyes used to the fish-tail gas burners.

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COLLINS

BOOKS IN GENERAL

It is a June evening. In the country town of Hollingford two girls are leaning out of a window trying to reach a cluster of climbing roses; the sewing and the French book fall to the ground. The spicy smell of currant bushes rises from Mr. Holbrook's old-fashioned garden at Woodley, the feathery asparagus forming "a pretty background to the pinks and gilly-flowers." At Hope Farm a young man listens in the great clean kitchen to family prayers, in which even the cattle are not forgotten, and later recalls that

> the court was so full of flowers that they crept out upon the low-covered wall and horse-mount, and were even to be found self-sown upon the turf that bordered the path to the back of the house. I fancied that my Sunday coat was scented for days afterwards by the bushes of sweetbriar and the fraxinella that perfumed the air.

How charming it all is; how gentle and orderly. We are, there is no doubt, in the pages of a story by Mrs. Gaskell—*Wives and Daughters*, *Cranford* or *Cousin Phillis*,* "admirable things," wrote Henry James, "that time has consecrated," and happily, now, reprinted.

But take down another volume and another (there are six novels and close on fifty stories); here are knife-fights in a smuggling town; a seaman describes a whaling adventure, a murdered man is buried in a back garden; an innocent girl meets a horrible end as a witch; there are seductions, shipwrecks, factory riots. And in *Mary Barton* is a carefully documented picture of the Manchester of the thirties, with its unemployed handloom weavers and opium-doped children, its disease and starvation.

Yet the placid garden and the Manchester slum are not unrelated. They meet in Mrs. Gaskell's own life. Veering always between nostalgia and responsibility, she looked at her Lady Ludlows and her mill operatives with the same tenderness and the same journalist's eye, alert for the living detail. Her private fancy for a peaceful if sometimes feudal gentility could quite easily exist side by side with her wish to bring harmony between worker and employer, "two classes," she called them, "dependent on each other in every possible way, yet each evidently regarding the interests of the other as opposed to their own." The death-beds and violence, commonplaces, after all, of early Victorian life, were no less a part of her experience than the quaint manners of Cranford. For, consider her own history. By the time she was a year old her mother and six infant brothers and sisters had died. A sailor brother, the only other survivor, disappeared on a voyage to India when Elizabeth was seventeen. The loss haunted her through life, bring him back as she would in one story after another. (Her essays for *Household Words* include one on *Disappearances*). Her childhood was passed in the country town of Knutsford in Cheshire—we know it as Cranford—in the quiet household of her aunt, Mrs. Lumb. Life here was pleasant but, surely, staid; for there is curiously little about children in her work. At twenty two she married William Gaskell, a Unitarian minister, and Manchester, "ugly, smoky Manchester; dear, busy, earnest, noble-working Manchester" became her home. She gave birth to six children; one was stillborn; Willy, the only boy, died of scarlet fever when he was a year old.

But her nature was not melancholy, and indeed, as housewife, parent, hostess, as well as writer, she lived too much in the present to draw very deeply on her imagination. Like many people who are attracted to mystery, she was not, herself, mysterious. The gliding adjectives, cordial, amiable, agreeable, animated, lose, when they rest on her, their false air of convention. The ripeness of her books is not only because they were all the work of maturity; (she was approaching forty when her first, *Mary Barton*, was published in 1848; her last, *Wives and Daughters*, was all but finished when she died at the age of fifty-five.) Her work reflects faithfully her charming and energetic personality—well-bred but not prudish (no writer has so well presented a lady); observant, but without the bright peering eye of malice. Her humour has weathered a century's fashions. Without hate or cruelty, she was on fire at any hint of persecution. In *Ruth* she defends the unmarried mother. In *Sylvia's Lovers* she attacks the press gang. She condemned the dressmakers who worked their girls to blindness or consumption, the strikers who threw vitriol on the strike-breakers, and the employers who opposed the strikers. *Lois the Witch* is a remarkable account of the hysteria that leads to witch-hunting. One of her most interesting essays, *The Accursed Race*, describes the inhuman treatment of a French tribe of untouchables.

Mrs. Gaskell did indeed seem to many readers of *Mary Barton* ("far above the ordinary garbage of Novels," approved Carlyle) a dangerous radical. The *Manchester Guardian* disliked her "morbid sensibility to the conditions of the operatives." She herself complained that people called her "socialist and communist." Yet she had no conscious wish for violent change; what she desired was the bringing about of an integrated society by reconciliation. "No one can feel more deeply than I how *wicked* it is to do anything to excite class against class," she wrote. "No praise could compensate me for the self-reproach I shall feel if I have written unjustly." The protest seems quaint, for *Mary Barton* is not to be read calmly, even to-day; its first-hand and clear-sighted knowledge of the people in both camps makes it, I think, the most effective of the "Chartist" novels. Her later *North and South* (1855) is concerned with a more subtle form of struggle. "They are wanting higher wages, I suppose?" the employer says. "That is the face of the thing. But the truth is, that they want to be masters." It is a problem that fiction could not solve, though it is strongly enough presented in the story of the man and woman resisting their mutual attraction because of their opposed views. Much of *North and South* was written while Mrs. Gaskell was staying at the home of Florence Nightingale, and her letters point the contrast of the two characters. Mrs. Gaskell was awed by the cold intensity with which the younger woman took up a cause, and by the inhuman way in which she threw off old enthusiasms. Such single-mindedness she admired, but could not emulate. Miss Nightingale in her turn showed a sardonic appreciation of her friend's sociological novels, particularly when they aroused public rancour.

On the surface, one book by Mrs. Gaskell in no way prepares us for the next. Yet we can recognise in her remarkable *Life of Charlotte Brontë* certain features that have been able to develop in the most favourable conditions. She did not have to formulate a story; it was there, at once wild, melancholy and homely, with more deaths, more dramatically timed, than even fictional plausibility of the day would have admitted. Her gift for detail, and for recreating a scene, flowered as she visited Haworth and London and Brussels, and spoke to people who had known Miss Brontë. Mrs. Gaskell's style which was not distinctive in itself, takes on the colour and power of the subject; some of it might have been written by Charlotte herself. There was, moreover, her vivid habit of writing first and wondering afterwards—after publication. But her hair-raising indiscretions had always a sound basis. Whatever the scandal at the time, her books are not the worse for her recklessness.

Still, she was shaken by the outcry, and it is not surprising that, in her last book, the delightful *Wives and Daughters*, she should return to a country town, where half a dozen young men and women journey precariously into marriage: the theme is hardly more than that. But it shows no lessening of her powers, whether in her presentation, with a not unkindly smile, of the delicate distinctions of the social hierarchy, or in some of the most shrewd and sensitive of her studies of women. (For some apt notes on Mrs Gaskell's male characters one cannot do better than turn to Miss Rosamond Lehmann's admirable introduction to this edition.) One character particularly, the captivating Cynthia seems to have taken her creator by surprise; can such charm be compatible with the highest principles? she asks herself, thinking, perhaps, of the behaviour she expected from her own sensible nice daughters.

But in another aspect *Wives and Daughters*, and still more the earlier *Cranford* suggest that Mrs. Gaskell's most individual gift was for comedy. *Cranford*, written in separate sketches for monthly publication, has the episodic form that best suited her; in the tradition of English prose comedy, like *Pickwick*, *The Diary of a Nobody*, *Three Men in a Boat*, it does not depend on plot. Nor does it ever edge into burlesque or satire. How tirelessly her dialogue chatters along:

> "It's a shame of Sir Harry to order in another book on farriery into the Book Society; Phoebe and I tried to read it, but really, there is no general interest in it." . . . The lace "made by the nuns abroad, they tell me. They say they can't make it now, even there. But perhaps they can now they've passed the Catholic Emancipation Bill." "Bombazine would have shown a deeper sense of her loss." But Mrs. Gaskell's humour lies also in situation and action. Here, for instance, is the draper's shop:

> I caught glimpses of a figure dodging behind the cloaks and mantles; and, by a dexterous move, I came face to face with Miss Pole, also in morning costume (the principal feature of which was her being without teeth and wearing a veil to conceal the deficiency). But she quickly took her departure, because, as she said, she had a bad headache and did not feel herself up to conversation.

Newspaper paths are stitched on the new carpet; Martha the maid nudges the Major who is slow at taking a helping of potatoes; Mrs. Jamieson munches seed-cake and sleeps through a party, conveying volumes without exerting herself to say a word. The imperial lethargy of this rude woman never quivers with a moment's shame. Yet even Mrs. Jamieson requires company for her insolence, and we find here, just as in *Mary Barton*, what is rare in the novel of our own time where each character is an island—social behaviour, the social group in action. Wit may be private, but comedy cannot grow out of solitude.

For a writer of her quality, Mrs. Gaskell had curiously little critical sense, and even less literary vanity. If she did not recognise her weaknesses, she really did not know how well, at times, she was writing. Expecting sentiment (and not unjustifiably) the reader is surprised by something as astringent as the ending to *Cousin Phillis*; expecting melodrama, by the skill with which she avoids it in that brilliant short story *The Crooked Branch*. Isolated scenes—Sylvia buying her red cloak—two crabbed grandfathers travelling home with an orphaned infant—remain with us always. But it is in *plot* that an age asserts itself in its novels, and when Mrs. Gaskell forces her characters into refined and lingering illnesses, sudden voyages, marriages and deaths which they seem mutely to resist, then, only, we remember for a moment the Victorian lady for whom writing was a refuge and not her sole occupation. The increasing restlessness that kept her travelling in England and abroad suggest, too, some adventurous need that neither her work nor her family could wholly satisfy. A characteristic act of her last years was to buy in secret, with money advanced by her publishers on the unwritten *Wives and Daughters*, a house in the south of England for her husband's retirement, though he was too settled, and devoted to his work in Manchester, to have made the scheme other than wildly fanciful. More careful writers than Mrs. Gaskell may reflect that it was in just this impulsive, uncalculating way that she crossed—hardly knowing, I suppose, that she had done so—the elusive frontier into literature.

NAOMI LEWIS

**Mary Barton; The Life of Charlotte Brontë; Cranford and Cousin Phillis;* and *Wives and Daughters*. By Mrs Gaskell. *John Lehmann*. 8s. 6d. *each*.

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THE LEVELLER OUTLOOK

The Concern for Social Justice in the Puritan Revolution. By W. SCHENK. *Longmans.* 15*s.*

Dr. Schenk has chosen a fascinating theme, which has not yet had adequate treatment. The classical Liberal historians were inclined to treat the Levellers as insignificant eccentrics, while Dr. Pease, who fully realised their importance, was more interested in their novel constitutional theories than in their far-reaching and enlightened social programme. There are two possible ways of treating such a subject. One may regard the proposals of a group, be it party or church, as a social phenomenon, affected by its class composition and its reaction to economic conditions. The Levellers were at the start small tradesmen and craftsmen, centred in Southwark and the City, and characteristically, one of the issues that stirred them most deeply was the status of the debtor and the inhumanity of the laws under which he suffered. Next they infiltrated the New Model and took up its grievances over pay and pensions. Finally, they won wide support among the rural population of the Home Counties, and in this last phase they had to take a stand against the relics of feudalism, the enclosure of the common lands, and the injustices that afflicted copyhold tenants. Had they survived Cromwell's repression and spread for another ten years, they might have carried out an agrarian revolution and anticipated the French by creating an English peasantry of freeholders. But apart from these reforms dictated by group interests, they also advocated a programme inspired by pure humanity—universal education, provision for old age and the mitigation of the brutal criminal law. For history the Levellers were emphatically a group. Theirs was the first English party with a modern organisation—a mass membership, regular subscriptions, weekly meetings, elected officers, whole-time propagandists, two weekly newspapers and a colour, sea-green, by which they were known. Their opinions about social justice were reached collectively, by discussion and compromise. Even Lilburne, as vain and quarrelsome as he was disinterested and courageous, was not a Führer who could impose his views upon them.

The other way of treating such a subject is to study the personal utterances of the thinkers and pamphleteers of the Left, regarded as individuals. This Dr. Schenk has done with much insight and industry. The result is a book which deserves a warm welcome for what it gives us, though one may without ingratitude add the qualification, that it would have gained in depth and perspective, if he had sketched with a broader brush the social background in which these writers evolved. He makes them live for us as individuals, but the chief distinction of his book is that he succeeds in tracing, more fully and with more imaginative grasp than any previous student, the connection between the social outlook and the religious convictions of these pioneers. Everything in the seventeenth century centred in religion, and that holds good of the individualist Lilburne as well as the communist Winstanley.

Dr. Schenk covers a wide field in his researches, for while he gives two-thirds of his space to the Levellers, he also discusses the Quakers, the Cambridge Platonists and the Fifth Monarchy "Saints." He might with advantage have carried his researches into the religious origins of social programmes even further back. The English Puritan Left can be understood only when we realise that it drew much of its inspiration directly from the Swiss, German and Dutch Anabaptists of the previous century. From them come both the communist and the pacifist trends in its thinking, the doctrine of the Inner Light and the cult of silence in Winstanley and the Quakers, their aversion to Bibliolatry and even such details as their objection to oaths and to the uncovering of the head in salutation. It is significant that Lilburne, Overton and Winstanley were or had been Baptists, while Walwyn wrote a moving defence of their most persecuted group, the Family of Love, and mentioned even the Anabaptists of Münster with sympathy, though for respectable opinion they were still a by-word of horror.

The best chapter in Dr. Schenk's book is his study of William Walwyn, the humanist among the Leveller leaders, a gracious and charitable personality in this age of fanaticism, and a moving writer with a gift for irony. Dr. Schenk has discovered a new fact about his career—that he lived on till his eightieth year and practised as a physician. The portrait he has unearthed shows strong and handsome features. There is no doubt that both Walwyn and Overton—the best pamphleteer of the Left until Defoe surpassed him—were in outlook and sentiment communists and in their religious views, liberals. Dr. Schenk is right in denying the common opinion that Overton was a materialist. His heresy about the non-existence of the soul between death and the resurrection was an old Anabaptist doctrine. Dr. Schenk's case can be reinforced, if we recall Overton's own statement that he was engaged on a book which aimed at reconciling science and religion.

Dr. Schenk's essay on Winstanley is interesting but controversial. He tilts against the Marxist writers who see in him a forerunner of their own prophet and describe him as a "scientific rationalist." These are unhistorical exaggerations, but in rejecting them Dr. Schenk falls into the opposite extreme. Certainly Winstanley's Communism has little affinity with Marxism. In his anarchist phase he can be regarded as a forerunner of Godwin and Proudhon. But he is interesting rather because he stated the fundamentals of every socialist creed so much more intelligently than any of his predecessors—so much more clearly, for example, than Münzer, who surpassed him immeasurably in learning. In him the socialist outlooks of the craftsman and the peasant were fused.

But is Dr. Schenk right in disputing Winstanley's rationalism? He was to the last a mystic who trusted the Inner Light and believed that the earth will bring forth her fruits in lavish abundance, when man ceases to be greedy and warlike. But was there not a vein of rationalism even in the early Anabaptists and Quakers? Here in plain words are Winstanley's opinions: he was a Pantheist who denied the personality of God; he wrote about "God or Reason" much as Spinoza wrote about *Deus sive Natura*; he described an ordered cosmos; he doubted the immortality of the soul; he had freed himself from the Hebrew Scriptures; he rejected all the Sacraments; he proposed to substitute for the usual church services lectures on history and the natural sciences. True, he did not bluntly say that religion is the opium of the people, for he had his own pantheistic religion, in which he firmly believed. But he did say that "divining religion," by which he meant the other-worldly religion of the divines and the churches, is an opiate, and he said it with equal courage, and insight. In his own highly original and poetical way this man was in some sense a rationalist. For the rest Dr. Schenk's study would have gained if he had realised that Winstanley's ideal commonwealth was a rather dull copy of More's *Utopia*, adapted to the Leveller programme. There is internal evidence that Overton also had been reading More. The Levellers had a long past behind them.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

AMERICANS

Selected Poems. By JOHN CROWE RANSOM. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 9*s.*

Poems, 1920-1945. By ALLEN TATE. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The conjuring orgies of Maskelyne and Devant used to conclude—they may still—with the exhibiting of a marvellous mousetrap, a Heath-Robinsonian affair, of innumerable shafts, windings, pulleys, levers, and cranks, through which the mouse passed by hinged and shunted gradations to a water-tank doom. The verse of an American poet, John Crowe Ransom, here collected, reminds me of that continuously fascinating mousetrap. Often creaking in its transitions, missing out no steps, adding some, it is yet crankily logical, and has the engaging ricketiness of some altogether home-made contrivance. Its machinery has been put together, part by part, with a quaint charming *gravitas*. Yet every part works; the materials have been devised to last, to withstand batterings of time or weather; and, whereas one could hardly imagine any mouse submitting to Mr. Maskelyne, Mr. Ransom has with eccentric patience caught a good many, which are substantial and interesting.

Landscapes and seasons encompass him, not fashions in thought. A lone operator, he seems to have no relation to his period, except that of having no relation to it, either as participant or escapist. Yet how his work tells, how sensitive and various and attractive it is! He is a poet who grinds nobody's axe—in other words, grinds everyone's; and who has cut human oddities, pretensions, and contortions into curious yet exact shapes, marked, like bedded plants, with latinically precise stick-labels—"Equilibrists," "Spectral Lovers," "Man Without Sense of Direction," "Necrological." But with all its quizzing observation, its assaults on the pretentious and the untenable, its pleasing essays in the mock-heroic—

> Fleet ships encountering on the high seas
> Who speak, and then unto the vast diverge,
> These hailed each other, poised on the loud surge
> Of one of Mrs. Grundy's Tuesday teas . . .

—his work shows, besides great technical ability, a heart as sound at the core as some bitter herb, a true eye for the tender and the pathetic, an unsentimental, anti-romantic amiability.

In that, too, he is a fixer, a contriver, sharply separating things which can be put right from things which can't. Death: that is hopeless, irrevocable, there's nothing there to be mended; in "Bells for John Whiteside's Daughter," "Janet Waking," in the exquisite "Dead Boy":

> The elder men have strode by the box of death
> To the wide flag porch, and muttering low send round
> The bruit of the day. O friendly waste of breath!
> Their hearts are hurt with a deep dynastic wound

he calmly, kindly underlines that unmanageable, intractable fact. But many things—partings, quarrels, rows, tense behaviours—are not only not irrevocable, they are unnecessary. Don't be rash, he says. Fix these while there's still time, tinker with them.

> This I know, that if they wrangle,
> Their words inevitably will jangle.
> If they be hateful as men
> They will be harsh as we have been.
> When they go to pecking
> You will soon hear shrieking,
> And those who will have the law,
> How these will jaw!

This head-scratching Hans Sachs stuff, admonishing the querulous with its humorous homespun gnomic philosophy, seems never to stray far from a friendly fireside. "Butter and hot toast" are still available, Mr. Ransom says, to the obdurate or the sulky. Indeed he might say it to Mr. Allen Tate, his fellow-countryman, whose gallery of fifty-five poems, also on view, is a far from friendly place, a vast museum of erudition, difficult to find one's way about in; learned stuff has been piled in everywhere, congesting every corner and shelf, and Mr. Tate does not seem to have been quite clever enough to pile some of it out. Somewhere among the bric-a-brac there is a living and serious poet, but it is a task searching for him.

He can be found in poems of pomp and circumstance, where the verse moves stiffly as if dragging heavy brocade, and where certain consonantal phrases—"strict impunity," "inscrutable infantry," "arrogant circumstance," "grim coats of ribboned felicity"—stand erect and loaded like lifeguards. These all come from the well-known "Ode to the Confederate Dead," an early poem still one of the most impressive. Where overloaded, as they often are, the longer pentametric monologues become strained and repellent. Mr. Tate might be an excellent Laureate, were he not also a formidable satirist; these disparate gifts—

red-carpeted pomposity and scowling mental impatience—fuse in his heroic satire on the American Air Force, which ends:

Take off, O gentle youth,
And coasting India
Scale crusty Everest
Whose mythic crest
Resists your truth;
And spying far away

Upon the Tibetan plain
A limping caravan,
Dive, and exterminate
The Lama, late
Survival of old pain.
Go kill the dying swan.

Throughout his work, too, a more personal, grimly disturbing theme intrudes.

Sheer time! Stroke of the heart
Towards retirement . . .

An obsession with the implacability of time, after all not uncommon in poetry, here swells to a terrifying, almost schizophrenic "reality repudiation"; it recurs variously and compulsively in agonised questions—"Who are the living? Who are the dead?" and makes one feel (particularly in "Trout Map") that Mr. Tate has been obliged to make obsessionally exact maps of reality; he seems to be overstuffing his museum with hard, tangible objects, in order to shut out, by the reassurance which these give, the spectre of some nightmare-like void, threatening him from immediately beyond.

GILES ROMILLY

NEW NOVELS

The Conversation. By CONRAD AIKEN. *Rodney Phillips & Green.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

My Friend the Enemy. By FRANK BAKER. *Boardman.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Last Conspiracy. By GEOFFREY PARSONS. *Dobson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Wasteland. By JO SINCLAIR. *Macmillan.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

It seems absurd that we should have had to wait eight years after its publication in America for an English edition of *The Conversation*, but in this country at any rate Mr. Conrad Aiken has never quite had the recognition which his talents both as poet and novelist deserve. Remembering *Blue Voyage*, *Great Circle* and *Bring! Bring!* it is not, perhaps, the kind of novel one would have expected Mr. Aiken to write. It is conceived deliberately on a small scale, the action being confined to the events of an evening and the following day. The conversation in question is the running quarrel between Tip Kane, a painter, and his wife Enid. He is not, perhaps, a good painter, certainly he is not a successful one, and Enid is weary of living the simple life, which includes among other things an inadequate water supply and an inefficient cess pit, in a fishing village on the coast of Connecticut, the American equivalent, one supposes, of St. Ives; she wants security, money, leisure. And she objects to his friends, uncouth bohemians from Greenwich Village for whom dirtiness is next to godliness. She wants him, in other words, to go back to Boston, to exploit influential family connections, and paint portraits. Mr. Aiken's theme, then, is the old one of the clash between the artist's desire to maintain his freedom and the pull of domesticity. His painter is no Ganguin, and domesticity wins. Mr. Aiken recreates with the most scrupulous exactitude the tension and the bickering between two admirable people who love each other. The book is imprinted with the stamp of truth; and though nagging plays its part in the story the reader is never nagged. Our sympathies are won for husband and wife alike. The writing, as always with Mr. Aiken, is fresh and lyrical. Tip, watching his small daughter at play—the relationship between father and child is exquisitely done—thinks: . . .

> . . . she was living in a world of her own, a burning and secret world of her own. The same world? A different world? A *new* world—that was it—the world of the poet, the *first* poet, the poet who saw simultaneously, for the first time, the sea and a flower. What! Dogs *and* horses in one and the same world! It was a miracle . . .

Mr. Aiken himself has always had this childlike faculty of seeing the world as permanently new, and, as *The Conversation* shows, it is as strong within him now as it was when he wrote *The Morning Song of Senlin* more than thirty years ago.

My Friend the Enemy is the first of Mr. Baker's novels that I have read. It is an impressively disturbing work, though it suffers, I think, from the distortion caused by the demands of an over-rigorous pattern in the plot. Mr. Baker's theme is the relationship between sadist and masochist, murderer and victim, the bully and the bullied. The hero and narrator, Morgan Vale, a successful playwright, is suddenly confronted at a country house by Vincent Collins, who as a boy had made life hell for him at school. Vale cuts short the encounter by summoning himself back to London by means of a faked telegram; but after that there is no escaping Collins. The two men haunt each other and need each other, are complementary; theirs is fundamentally a love relation. Mr. Baker handles his violent, near-Dostoevskian plot with great ingenuity and constant invention; and he is much more successful with his scenes of the theatre than is usual in fiction. But as a study of the roots of cruelty, *My Friend the Enemy* suffers, it seems to me, from Mr. Baker's attempts to extract philosophical truths of universal scope from the situation he has chosen to represent.

The Last Conspiracy reminds one that the first attempts to graft Kafka on to the stem of English fiction were made by such Communist writers of the 'thirties as Mr. Upward; and perhaps this is to say that Mr. Parsons' admirably written novel tends to date. Its initial situation is such as almost to out-Kafka Kafka. Mr. Parsons' hero wakes up to find himself in uniform aboard a troopship; he has lost his memory and has no notion who he is; but it soon becomes clear that, soldier as he appears to be, he is under the authority of neither the military nor the ship's captain but of a mysterious Mr. Spencer, who appears to be a civilian of no recognised official status. He realises that he is the unconscious possessor of information so valuable that Mr. Spencer is prepared to torture and kill for it. From then on, the novel has the quality of a first-class thriller, as the hero, from conversations with Spencer, contacts made with soldiers and crew, and a single letter found in his wallet, gradually works out, though he never discovers his identity, the nature of the revolutionary forces he stands for and of the conspiracy, presumably of international capitalism, whose agent Spencer is. It is excellent fun, most adroitly composed, though its relevance as symbolism to the position of Communism to-day may be doubted.

Miss Sinclair's novel is a serious, detailed and absorbing study of the psychological condition of the children of Eastern European Jewish immigrants in the United States, the waste land of her title, the sense of frustration and guilt under which many of them labour. Her central character, John Brown (né Jacob Braunitz), hates being a Jew, hides it in his job—he "gets art" for a newspaper, i.e., is a press photographer—is ashamed of his parents, who still talk Yiddish and are still foreigners in America, and in consequence is bitterly conscious of having no identity. Miss Sinclair solves his problems by sending him to a psychiatrist, and the novel consists of his interviews with what he calls "the head doctor." Miss Sinclair conducts the analysis with great skill.

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though the psychiatrist gets results in what would seem almost record time. But it is surely an ironic comment on our times that the symbol of psychological adjustment should be a man's hastening to join the army. WALTER ALLEN

LAWLESS YOUTH

Lawless Youth: A Policy for the Juvenile Courts by the International Committee of the Howard League for Penal Reform. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

The things that Nietzsche had said in the 1880's became unfashionable in the first World War and unspeakable in the second. People even forgot the *Genealogy of Morals:*

> The broad effects which can be obtained by punishment in man and beast are the increase of fear, the sharpening of the sense of cunning, the mastery of the desires; so that punishment tames man, but does not make him "better."

The idea of punishing people to make them better is probably as old as organised religion, while punishment to make the punisher feel better is older. The more rational morality of to-day measures itself by wider results; and finding that penal repression does nothing to reduce the supply of culprits searches about for other methods which (to the scorn of its critics) it calls "treatment." I think the word, in English at least, is unfortunate in its implication that crime is an illness rather than an eccentricity, but it implies also a recognition that we got nowhere with the rack, the pillory, the convict ships, and the whip. If the medical analogy has a notional value, it is that it turns the mind of authority towards youth, where prophylaxis must obviously begin.

All countries in the civilised world are now agreed about this, but they still differ profoundly (even in Europe) as to definition and method. In otherwise progressive legislations the expedient of penal repression for children still lingers, basing itself on a faculty of "discernment"—if a child knows the difference between right and wrong it is eligible for punishment, whether the punishment does any good or not. The age at which this comes into operation varies considerably in different countries: in England a child under eight cannot be charged with a criminal offence; in France and Poland the age is thirteen; in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Norway it is fourteen; and it is fifteen in Denmark and Sweden, where young offenders are dealt with by Child Welfare Councils and not by the criminal courts at all.

To suggest a policy for the juvenile courts of Europe, the International Committee of the Howard League for Penal Reform has just produced this extraordinary symposium of expert views and recommendations, with appendices giving critical summaries of the "treatment" of young offenders in all the principal European countries. "The children's court," says Margery Fry in her chapter on *Treatment not Punishment*, "is the state's protection against grave crime in ten or twenty years' time." The idea is to be seen behind all the systems here described—this and the Belgian conception of "the safety of society through education instead of repression."

Many projects of social and penal reform were drafted secretly during the war years in Nazi-occupied Europe, and the chaos in which all kinds of plans for reconstruction are now struggling towards fulfilment is not likely to extinguish an optimism so fine and determined. Nothing shows more sharply the bitter futility of war than the way in which, almost on the very day when hostilities end, these internationally-minded groups resume their contacts—the meteorological offices, for example, and the churches, and the various organizations for social and spiritual progress which grew out of the League of Nations and now work under Uno. Bodies like this international committee of the Howard League are our unacknowledged legislators. "In years to come," to quote one of the contributors to this book, "people will be as astonished at our present penal system as we are when we consider the way in which society protected itself against crime in the past." I believe this is true, and that only by the methods urged in this book can the problem of criminal behaviour be sensibly approached. We are not doing very well with crime at the moment. C. H. ROLPH

THE CHINESE SOCIETY.

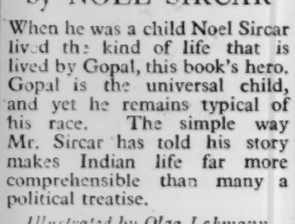
The Golden Wing. By LIN YUEH-HWA. *Kegan Paul.* 16s.

A Chinese Village. By MARTIN C. YANG. *Kegan Paul.* 18s.

Roughly over eighty per cent. of the Chinese population live in villages. Their economic life has undergone many changes since machine-made articles from the Western World were introduced into their households about a century ago. Handicraft industry, which helped to make the rural economy self-sufficient, broke down. Import business began to flourish in the seaport towns and gave rise to a small new class of wealthy people. Through their connections with foreign Powers and their ability to talk foreign languages (generally American with a strong Shanghai accent) they have also become the new Mandarins in the Government: and, owing to the lack of native industry, big absentee landlords by investing their money in land. It is only quite recently that they have begun to realise it is safer and more handy to keep their fortune in New York banks. Civil war and even the Japanese invasion seem to be an integral part of this genesis, and the communist uprising the most natural consequence. This last phase of contemporary Chinese history has become so serious that Mr. Truman had to send Mr. Marshall to China as a mediator between the contending parties; and so complicated that the eminent envoy's efforts proved entirely futile. And the Communist agitation is now spreading out so widely that even the most up-to-date army China has ever had cannot check its influence.

This state of affairs makes the two books under review extremely interesting, not because they give any adequate interpretation of the situation, but because they present, with great detachment and accuracy, a miniature of Chinese society, in which human relationship remains pretty much the same as it was two hundred years ago, while economic and political life has undergone so many changes. Both books cover almost the same period dating approximately from the revolution of 1911 up to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war, a period in which the Kuomintang was the ruling party in China.

The Golden Wing portrays chiefly the growth of a family, its rise from obscurity to prominence and wealth. The hero started his career as a shop assistant in a market town and emerged in early middle age as a leading partner in the shop. His influence was extended to his native village after he had bought some land. As a politically powerless small merchant, he encountered many difficulties in the first years. Once he even landed in prison. Here the old human element began to work in his favour: he got free by bribing the officials. His sons, whom he was now in the position to send to modern schools in the provincial capital, swore themselves into "brotherhood" with their promising schoolmates, who later became social celebrities. Through these connections the sons also became prominent figures in public life. Now no trouble whatever can embarrass the old man, thanks



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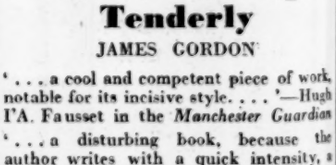

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to the rising influence of the family. But one last trouble he has failed to surmount: the arrival of the Communists and their threat to confiscate his property. Here the story ends.

The author attributes the success of his hero to strong will and sound judgment as well as to chance. From his ups and downs a moral is drawn to govern human activities. "Human life swings between balance and disturbance, between equilibrium and disequilibrium" with the tendency striving to achieve equilibrium. This theory reminds one the favourite maxim of ancient Chinese historians that "history is a process of disunion and reunion." The idea is that a period of peace would be followed by a period of confusion or *vice versa*: in other words, no matter what dynasties come and go, life would remain the same. This is of course true of the old days when the change of dynasties only meant new rulers. Should the new dynasty be Communist the commonplace might for once prove untrue.

A Chinese Village is a less ambitious work. It does not draw any moral, although it proposes a few remedies for the deterioration of village life, based on the rural reform programme of the Kuomintang, which has existed in writing for over two decades. It extends its study from a single family to a group of families. The working of the old human relationship in the disrupting community is vividly depicted. Law often becomes a mere collection of words. Most of the government officials are nothing but hungry wolves with a rapacious appetite for bribes. Few of their activities are positively constructive. The peasants, hampered by the old system and antiquated methods of cultivation, seem to get deeper and deeper in debt each year. They would have fared better by simply remaining idle. Enterprising businessmen, who wish to direct their profits to the development of industry are also generally frustrated in the long run.

What amazes one is that the "old feudal force," to quote the terminology of the Chinese Communists, should have remained so persistently strong in an age of numerous changes. It corrupts and pervades everything, except perhaps Communism. Even the Christian church, introduced by the efficient Americans and Europeans, cannot escape the influence. In *The Golden Wing* one of the sons went to America to attend a missionary conference on behalf of Chinese Christians, and yet he could still remain an ancestor-worshipper as a devoted son of the family. Had the story not been terminated by the advance of the Communists, we might have seen him "sworn into brotherhood" with the new Mandarins through his connections with America and the Christian religion, and thereby become one of the important men shaping the destiny of the nation.

In view of the rapid turn of events in China to-day, both books, which supplement each other, seem slightly out of date. The community in *A Chinese Village*, judging by the recent news, is now under the domination of the Communists, who are apparently staging a drastic change in land possession and human relationship. *The Golden Wing* has probably been finished off in the jigsaw fightings between Communist guerillas and the Government forces. But these books are truthful and authentic in their presentation of rural life in China, and they will certainly prove valuable documents to future historians and students of sociology.

CHUN-CHAN YEH

DAVID GARRICK

Garrick. By MARGARET BARTON. *Faber.* 21s.

"*Off* the stage he was a mean little hound, but on stage—oh, my great God!" Such was the impression Garrick left on a contemporary. The testimonials to his acting power are legion, and—though there is room for more—Miss Barton quotes quite a number of them. One of the most pleasing tells how he competed with Spranger Barry in the part of Romeo, and how Garrick, though short, squat and ageing, completely surpassed his wonderfully graced rival—the William Terris of his day. Acting of this order transcends physical facts, and sets a standard for great acting that remains constant, however much theatrical fashions may change. Indeed, the conventions of Garrick's day make diverting reading; beaux upon the stage (one of his few serious reverses occurred when he tried to banish them to the auditorium proper), "claqueurs" in pit and gods, and actors applauded for the most part according to whether they spoke for Virtue or Vice.

Miss Barton is full of information on these matters, almost to the point of over-emphasising the fustian and rhodomontade. Genius, in acting as elsewhere, will out. Benjamin Wilson's painting of Garrick as Lear—one of this book's excellent illustrations—resolves any doubts in the matter. The incongruity of the eighteenth-century clothes, after the first shock, becomes insignificant, and the face is more touchingly the "ruin'd piece of nature" than in any other Lear picture I have seen.

Wit, poet, traveller, prolific writer as well as actor-manager, Garrick was very much a man of his century, and it is his many-sidedness that emerges more clearly from this book than his unsurpassable powers as a player. Miss Barton's style falls between the inspired insight of the romantic, novel-like biography, and the knock-down effect of veracity that comes from allowing an overwhelming collection of facts to speak for itself. She has been concerned to clear Garrick of the charge of "mean little hound," and thus tends to minimise his less pleasant side. Perhaps in this she may claim an ally in Dr. Johnson, who had some hard things to say about his old friend and former pupil's acting, but who almost always came to the defence of his character.

In many respects, however, the book is interesting and useful. Miss Barton has much to say, not only about Garrick, but other actors of the day; about Barry and Cibber and Tate Wilkinson, and Macklin, who once strode off stage and knocked down the prompter because, as he then returned to tell the audience, "The fellow interrupted me in my Grand Pause!"; and there is much also about Foote, the wooden-legged farceur who, according to Johnson, had "powers superior to them all." Miss Barton might have been more tolerant of Colley Cibber, one of the few actors to write a good autobiography (and, more remarkable still, to write it himself!) No less a judge than Shaw has found that Cibber's version of "Richard III" is more effective on the stage than the original. And although almost all the pieces in contemporary favour are mentioned, more might have been said about Otway's plays, which were deservedly held in great esteem in the eighteenth century. In fact, a revival of this neglected playwright would seem overdue.

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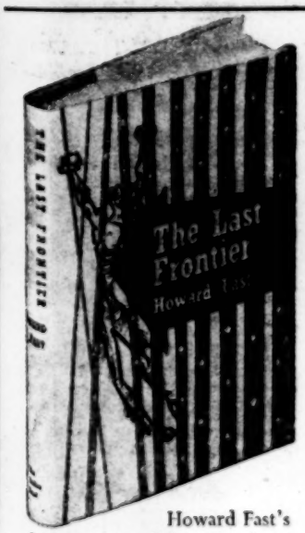

Howard Fast's fine new novel has just been published at 9s 6d. He has also edited *The Selected Work of Tom Paine* (10s 6d) ready later this month

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HEINEMANN

Culture in Early Anglo-Saxon England. By D. ELIZABETH MARTIN-CLARKE. *Johns Hopkins University Press. Geoffrey Cumberlege.* 12s. 6d.

This is a collection of lectures delivered at the Johns Hopkins University last year by the Vice-Principal of St. Hugh's, Oxford. Its scope is not as wide as its title might suggest; but it makes a forward step towards the assimilation of the many new facts suggested by the discovery of the Sutton Hoo burial ship in 1939 into the corpus of our knowledge about Anglo-Saxon culture. The meaning of the finds at Sutton Hoo has not yet received full archæological comment—the war, of course, intervened—but it is already clear that certain generally held views about Anglo-Saxon culture must be radically changed. (This is very pleasing to those of us who suffered from too dogmatic professors of Anglo-Saxon.) The Sutton Hoo burial ship is the first to be found in England; such workmanship in jewellery has not previously been found, except in Kent, where the Merovingian Frank influence was strongest: Sutton Hoo is in Suffolk, and the predominating influence in the workmanship of the jewellery and plate seems to have been Swedish. Miss Martin-Clarke can only speculate on such matters, lacking final expert information. But she is illuminating on, for example, that remarkable poem, *The Dream of the Rood*, although perhaps she insufficiently considers the essentially Byzantine nature of the imagery. (The cosmic, flowering cross reaching to "the corners of the world," for example). She makes, however, two interesting points: that Anglo-Saxon culture arises from an intersection of the cultures of the Romans, Celts, Scandinavian and Franks (and, through the Franks, the great Byzantine culture); and second, her emphasis on digging, museum visiting, and drawing of Anglo-Saxon objects for university students of pre-Conquest literature.

Adam. International Review. 1s. 6d.

Theatre To-day. *The Saturn Press.* 3s. 6d.

The difficulties of the International review are enormous but within its modest limits, the latest issue of *Adam* has done a service in introducing the English reader to a scattering of contemporary Danish writers. There is a fantasy, in the characteristic Scandinavian vein by Johanns Jensen, who won the Nobel Prize. There is a vigorous passage of reminiscence from the hand of Martin Anderson Nexö, a proletarian novelist of the older generation, who is little known here, and whose work suggests a Gorki from whom the vagrant sting has been withdrawn. There is the *de rigeur* note on Kierkegaard and Sartre. *Adam* throws a small but useful light upon its scene.

That lively theatrical miscellany *Theatre To-day* appears in a new and considerably enlarged format. This allows the publication of much longer and more considered articles and, a valuable feature, the printing of some text. Here, for instance, among many good things, are six excerpts of James Law Forsyth's *The Bronze Horse*, with an introduction by Michel St. Denis and a controversial study of Brecht's theatre by Eric Bentley. Strongly recommended.

Week-end Competitions

No. 960

Set by Thomas Smallbones

A widely used advertisement technique is the simple story of a light dialogue. The usual prizes are offered for a contemporary advertisement in such a style for one of the following branded products of another age: a medieval love filter; a popular Falernian; a well-known variety of leech (for medical purposes); an Egyptian embalming oil; a Hymettan honey. Entries by July 20.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 957

Set by Sebastian

The usual prizes are offered for an advertisement suitable for inclusion in the personal column of this paper offering a soul for sale to the devil or any other interested party. Maximum length, 150 words.

Report by Sebastian

A very large entry but, on the whole, a too generalised view of the subject. Also, I was out of date in suggesting that souls are readily for sale; atomised by science, materialism and psycho-analysis, the soul is in fact experiencing a revival. There is a buyer's not a seller's market. Hengist really recognises this in his bitter entry:

Rationalist, reduced circumstances, offers soul, suit pushing religious body with filmable myth, or thriller writer cashing in modern desire damnation.

There were diehards like Ferdinand, the bourgeois formalist, "happy, gifted, successful" who offered his soul to the State Museum "to remind serfs last days western culture," in exchange for "reach me downs Party Member." There were Social Democrats giving up; a large number of "owners going abroad"; a sprinkling of converts backsliding from Farm Street or the Party already. It was all in very bad taste, of course, and I leaned towards the less ill-natured entries. There was, incidentally, a world of cliché which very few competitors touched. Goodish entries came from J. C. B. Date, R. Hemington, L. G. Udall, Hassall Pitman, Stanley J. Sharpless, D. R. Barclay, J. M. P., Anthony Curtis and M. L. Rich. I award a prize of a guinea to each of the following:

For Sale.—Small dry Soul (for wh. owner has no further use); well-broken to dusty answers; trained to hark!; also hark! hark!; redeemable. Apply "Ex-Vicar," c/o Messrs. Russell and Huxley, Wells. L. E. J.

Vendor offers soul like singing bird, mature apple tree (good cropper), rainbow shell, to purchaser who will raise dais of silk and down, provide bail vair and case purple dies, carvings of doves and pomegranates, gold and silver grapes. Write Christina Rosetti, c/o Macmillans. JOHN FAIRFIELD

Sportsman, agnostic, prog. views, wd. sell wife's soul to considerate clergyman, or wd. exch. for brace working ferrets (1½ brace if wife's body included). Reason for disposal, disharmony *re* blood sports. Tel. or call 10, Gt. Turnstile. E. V. FORDHAM

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Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns re-s to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or oman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless or she is excepted from the provision of the ntrol of Engagement Order, 1947, or the ncy is for employment excepted from the vision of that Order.

B.C. invites applics. for post of Chief As-sistant, who will act as deputy to the Con-ller of Third Programme. Successful candi-e will be in close and constant touch with depts. supplying the various categories of gramme output (i.e. Music, Drama, Talks,). Abilities to judge programme material to supervise forward planning of prog. will reqd. Sal. is in grade rising by annual rements of £60 or £75 to max. of 360 or £1,610 according to qualifics. De-ed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broad-ting Hse., W.1, marked "Third Programme, Stm," within 7 dys. For acknowl. enclose mped addressed envelope.

IGERIA—Government Statistician. A va-ancy exists for a Statistician to take charge the newly established Statistical Dept. of the vernment of Nigeria. Candidates should ess a first-or second-class Hons. degree in ths. or Economics and Statistics, tog. with siderable practical exp. of statistical work, d organising ability. Salary, £1,200 plus £400 ntation allowance. Higher sal. would be sidered in case of candidate having excep-al qualifics. and/or exp. Age limit 45 (for ionable terms). Apply to Director of Re-itment, Colonial Office, 15 Victoria St. .1.

OYAL Naval College, Greenwich, London, S.E.10. Applics. invited for appointment of lian Lecturer in English and History De-rtment early Sept., 1948. Applicants should ees Hons. Degree in one or more of follow-subjects: History, English, Economics, graphy, Modern Greats. Their principal erests should be in affairs of the Modern rld. Interest in the other humanities, e.g. , Music, The Drama, desirable. Previous in Schools, Universities/Educ. branches Services, pref. Royal Navy, desirable but not en. Applicants must be natural born British jects. Sal. scale £360 by annual increments £25 to £600 with provision for entry above imum according to exp. Opportunities exist advancement to Senior Lecturer with sal. £650+£25 to £850 per annum. Appoint-nt carries benefits of Federated Superannua-n Scheme for Univs. Applics., with names 3 referees and statement of previous exp., soon as possible to Director (P.A.), Educ. rt., Admiralty, London, S.W.1, from whom ther partics. obtainable.

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ONDON School of Econs. and Political Sci-ence (Univ. of London). Applics. invited two Assistant Lectureships in department Sociology, (a) in Ethics and Social Philosophy, with special ref. to social and economic ditions. Sal. scale £400 p.a., rising to £500, superann. benefits and family allowances ring sal. according to exp. and qualifics.). lics., with names of 3 refs., to be forwarded oon as possible to Sec., London School of r., Houghton St., Aldwych, W.C.2, from m further partics. may be obtained.

CC. Applics. invited for post of qualified Assistant Master (resident) at Linden Lodge idential School for Blind, Bolingbroke e, Wandsworth Common, S.W.11. Pre-t exp. with blind children not essential. didates not holding Diploma of College of hers of the Blind will be reqd. to obtain hin three years of date of appointment. ching will be mainly with children of pri-y school age and ability to teach P.T. and ming and play the piano or violin desir-. Burnham Scale salary with two additl. ments throughout scale carried beyond the , plus a further additional increment for rs of Diploma of College of Teachers of Blind. Emoluments of board, lodging and ing in consideration of supervisory and oxous duties outside school hrs., and at ends. Form of applic. from Educ. Officer 5), County Hall, S.E.1 (s.a.e. necessary), rnable by July 24. Canvassing disqualifies. RDS College of Art. Principal: E. E. Pullée, A.R.C.A. App'ics. invited for post ll-time teacher of Sculpture in the School Sculpture and Pottery. Candidates should ssociates of Royal College of Art or hold ivalent qualific. Knowledge of pottery will an advantage. Salary scale: Men: £300-555; Women: £270–£12–£420. In addi-there will be a responsibility allowance of . Additions for degree or equivalent quali-and approved training. Prev. teaching and service and prof. exp. will be taken into nt in determining starting salary. Forms pplic., which should be returned as soon sible, and further partics., may be ob-d by sending a s.a. foolscap e. to Director duc., Education Offices, Leeds, 1.

Appointments Vacant—continued

UNIVERSITY College London Union will shortly appoint a Union Secretary, man/woman, aged 30 to 40. Essential qualifics.: shorthand typing, 2 knowl. of general office routine, administrative ability and exp. of cttee. work. Exp. of student activities advantage. Sal. £300–£400 according to qualifics. and exp. 4 weeks' annual holiday. Applicants should reside within 30 miles of College. Duties commence Sept. 20. Applics., with partics. of exp. and names of 2 refs., to be forwarded by July 31, to President, University College, London Union, Gower St. W.C.1. This appointment is excepted from Control of Engagements Order.

L.C.C. reqs. at Leavesden Green Emergency Training College, Leavesden, Nr. Watford, Herts, res. Nurse-Matron to take charge of College Sick Bay and to be responsible under College Medical Officer, for health of about 320 male and 150 female students; also to assist Domestic Bursar in Admin. of College. Candidates must be S.R.N. Sal. £775 p.a. plus tax-free emoluments of board, lodging and laundry. Temporary appointment, duration depending on life of College (approx. 18 months). Appointment exempt from Control of Engagement Order, 1947. Write, stating details of qualifics. and exp., to Principal at College. (1470.)

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NETHERNE Hospital, Coulsdon. A second Psychiatric Social Worker is reqd. at Netherne Hospital. The salary will be at a point on the J.N.C. Scale in accordance with the exp. of the candidate and the appointment will be permanent and pensionable subject to a medical exam. A car and typist are provided. Work is interesting & varied and includes out-patient clinics and opportunities for research.

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CITY of Bath Educ. Cttee. Bath Academy of Art, Corsham Court, Corsham, Wilts. Principal, Mr. Clifford Ellis. The Academy includes Bath School of Art and also, among other activities, a training college for men and women teachers of art in schools of general education. Applics. invited for follg. posts, both at Burnham Scale: (1) Art Teacher who should be interested and expd. in teaching children. (2) Art Teacher who should be interested and expd. in teaching part-time day and evening students. Applic. forms and further partics. obtainable from Principal at above address.

BLACKWELL'S Booksellers, Broad St. Oxford, req. shtd. typist for responsible job with gd. prospects. Work includes copying of French and German and general clerical work; a high standard of accuracy essential. Write, giving qualifics. and sal. expected.

Appointments Vacant—continued

UNIVERSITY College, Exeter. Applics. invited for Post of Lecturer in English (special qualifics. in Old English). Applics. to Registrar, from whom further partics. obtainable.

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